



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

# GLOBAL INITIATIVE NEWSLETTER 26

## (MARCH 2014)

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## 1 GLOBAL PROGRESS

### **Macedonia and Turkmenistan join the list of states prohibiting all corporal punishment of children**

The Global Initiative is pleased to be able to add Macedonia and Turkmenistan to the list of states where the law prohibits all forms of corporal punishment of children, including in the home.

In Macedonia, the Law on Child Protection 2013 prohibits all forms of corporal punishment in article 12(2): “All forms of sexual exploitation and sexual child abuse (harassment, child pornography, child prostitution), forced procuring, selling or trafficking children, psychological or physical violence and harassment, punishment or other inhuman treatment, all kinds of exploitation, commercial exploitation and abuse of children that violates basic human freedoms and rights and rights of the child, are prohibited.” Article 12(6) states that children are to be protected in all settings: “The state and institutions are obliged to take all

necessary measures to ensure the right of the children and prevent any form of discrimination or abuse regardless of the place where they are committed, the severity, intensity and duration.” The Government confirmed the prohibition during the recent Universal Periodic Review of Macedonia.

In Turkmenistan, prohibition was first enacted in child law in 2002, and was more recently reiterated in family law in 2012, but the process of verifying relevant information and obtaining official confirmation that the prohibition is comprehensive has taken many years. In a letter to the Global Initiative dated 13 January 2014, the Government provided the necessary confirmation that all corporal punishment, without exception, is unlawful under the Law on Guarantees of the Rights of the Child 2002 (art. 24) and the Family Code 2012 (arts. 85 and 89).

This brings the total number of states worldwide to achieve prohibition in all settings to 36.

For more information, see the Global Initiative’s detailed reports on [Macedonia](#) and [Turkmenistan](#).

### **New global progress and delay publication to support advocacy**

As at March 2014, 36 states have achieved prohibition in all settings, including the home, and governments of at least 47 others have expressed a commitment to enacting full prohibition. But much remains to be done. Only 5.5% of the global child population is legally protected from corporal punishment in all settings of their lives, and three children in ten live in a state in which corporal punishment is not fully prohibited in any setting.

These are just some of the statistics in the latest issue of the Global Initiative’s new briefing, [“Prohibiting all corporal punishment of children: progress and delay”](#). The graphic briefing presents facts and figures on global progress towards prohibition and calls for tougher action, including legal advocacy, to be taken when governments resist reform. Hard copies are available for advocacy purposes: email [info@endcorporalpunishment.org](mailto:info@endcorporalpunishment.org).

### **Positive moves towards law reform**

**Armenia:** As at January 2014, amendments to the Family Code which would reportedly prohibit all corporal punishment were with the Ministry of Social Affairs and would be signed by the Minister before being sent to the Government. [Save the Children Armenia](#) has been involved in campaigning for prohibition.

**Bolivia:** The draft [Children and Adolescents Code](#), which would prohibit all corporal punishment including in the home, was approved by the Chamber of Deputies in December 2013. It must be approved by the Senate before becoming law. The Coalición Boliviana por los Derechos de los Niños, Niñas y Adolescentes is working for prohibition in this context.

**Estonia:** On 30 December 2013, the draft new Child Protection Act was released for public consultation; it includes a provision which prohibits “corporal punishment, also child’s punishment in any other way that imperils his or her mental, emotional or physical health.” It is anticipated that it will come into force in January 2015. The [Ombudsman for Children](#) is working for prohibition.

**Greenland (country within the Kingdom of Denmark):** Proposed legislative amendments are under discussion which would make the Danish Act on Parental Responsibility 2007, which prohibits corporal punishment, applicable in Greenland. It is anticipated that prohibition will enter into force in Greenland in January 2015. The [National Spokesperson for Children](#) is advocating for prohibition.

**US Virgin Islands:** A [bill](#) which would prohibit corporal punishment in public schools was passed by the Committee on Education and Workforce Development in February 2014. The bill would designate public schools as “Safe Havens”, where corporal punishment will not be administered by anyone.

## Other positive developments

**Belgium:** In its observations on the merits of the complaint submitted against it under the European Committee of Social Rights collective complaints procedure, that it is in violation of the European Social Charter because corporal punishment of children is not prohibited, the Belgian Government stated it is willing to consider explicit prohibition in civil law. This represents significant progress since the Government has previously asserted repeatedly that existing law offers children adequate protection.

**Ireland:** The [Irish Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children](#) and the [Children's Rights Alliance](#), both of which have worked for prohibition for many years, called for prohibition at the [launch](#) of a new [study](#), which found that 57% of respondents would support a complete ban on slapping in Ireland, 62% of respondents believed it was already illegal to slap a child and 73% thought slapping was not an effective way to discipline a child. The study, carried out in late 2013, involved a nationally representative sample of 1,008 adults including 655 parents. (McCarthy, D. (2013), *Attitudes to Child Discipline*, Dublin: ISPC)

**Zimbabwe:** In November 2013, Mrs Constance Chigwamba, the Permanent Secretary in the Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education, told school authorities that anyone who applied any form of physical pain on children either at home or in school risked prosecution under the new Constitution. "We are rectifying some of our policies to align them with the new constitution. As a ministry we took a position to stop the application of corporal punishment on pupils as this form of disciplining a child has proved to have some adverse effects on children," she said. (Note: the new Zimbabwean Constitution adopted in 2013 significantly strengthens children's protection from violence and in particular does not include the specific references to "moderate corporal punishment" that were in the previous Constitution. However, there are other national laws which expressly authorise corporal punishment: these must be repealed.)

## But...

**Czech Republic:** A new Civil Code came into effect in January 2014 which includes provisions relating to parental discipline but does not prohibit all corporal punishment. Rather, it states that "educational means can be used only in the form and extent as is reasonable under the circumstances, does not endanger health of the child or its development and does not affect the human dignity of the child".

**Papua New Guinea:** In September 2013, the Family Protection Act 2013 was passed. Although it covers children as well as men and women and contains provisions against domestic violence, it does not explicitly prohibit all corporal punishment in childrearing or repeal the Criminal Code provision for the use of force "by way of correction".

**Solomon Islands:** The Child and Family Welfare Bill is ready for submission to Parliament and currently with the Ministry of Women, Youth, Children and Family Affairs; it does not include prohibition.

**UK, Wales:** Despite 10 years of commitment to prohibition of all corporal punishment by successive previous Labour-led governments in Wales, the current Labour Government resisted the use of the Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Bill to ban physical punishment of children, causing an amendment which would have prohibited all corporal punishment to be rejected. During the debate in the National Assembly a government minister indicated that there would be opportunities to examine this issue in forthcoming legislation in this Assembly term, i.e. before 2016, and that it would be good to work on the issue on a cross-party basis. [Children are Unbeatable! Wales](#) has long campaigned for prohibition, with support from many organisations across Wales, including all the main parenting organisations and many Christian, Muslim and inter-faith bodies. Shortly before the vote, a vigil dedicated to ending legalised violence against children was held in St David's Cathedral. The vigil, attended by the Mayor of St Davids, members of the city council and many others, was led by the Bishop of St Davids, Wyn Evans, who said that violence against the weak and defenceless, particularly when sanctioned by the state, should have no place in a civilised society.

**USA, Kansas:** A bill which would have increased the severity of corporal punishment which can lawfully be inflicted on children was introduced, but died in committee. The bill would have explicitly allowed parents, other family members and people with "written authority" from parents to use corporal punishment,

including teachers, to punish children with “up to ten forceful applications in succession of a bare, open-hand palm against the clothed buttocks of a child and any such reasonable physical force on the child as may be necessary to hold, restrain or control the child in the course of maintaining authority over the child, acknowledging that redness or bruising may occur on the tender skin of a child as a result”. The [Center for Effective Discipline](#), which works for prohibition of corporal punishment, [condemned](#) the bill.

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## 2 CAMPAIGNS AND CALLS FOR PROHIBITION

### International and regional developments

Save the Children and the Churches’ Network for Non-violence jointly hosted an interactive exhibition entitled “Justice for Children – End legalised violence against children” at the 10th Assembly of the World Council of Churches (WCC), held in Busan, Republic of Korea, 28 October to 8 November 2013. The activity contributed to the Assembly theme “God of life lead us to justice and peace”, emphasising that justice and peace are unattainable so long as violent punishment of children persists. In an open message, participants called for churches, ecumenical bodies, interfaith networks, NGOs and inter-governmental organisations to respond to the ethical, moral and spiritual imperatives to uphold children’s dignity, including by working with others in the global movement to prohibit and eliminate corporal punishment of children.

The [Caribbean Coalition for the Abolition of Corporal Punishment of Children](#), supported by the Global Initiative to End All Corporal Punishment of Children, continues to advocate for prohibition across the region. It has released a briefing, “[Progress towards prohibiting all corporal punishment of children in the Caribbean](#)”, which highlights the human rights imperative to prohibit all violent punishment of children in all Caribbean states and territories, summarises the progress made towards prohibition and what remains to be done in each Caribbean state and territory and emphasises the many immediate opportunities for working to fulfil children’s right to protection in law from all corporal punishment. Hard copies are available: email [info@endcorporalpunishment.org](mailto:info@endcorporalpunishment.org).

### National work for prohibition and elimination of corporal punishment

**Bermuda (British Overseas Territory):** In October 2013, the [Coalition](#) for the Protection of Children [called](#) for prohibition of school corporal punishment in the context of the planned review, in 2014, of the Education Act 1996 and Education Rules 2006.

**Italy:** In 2013, the sixth [report](#) of the [CRC Group](#), a group of 82 NGOs which monitors implementation of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child in Italy, called for Parliament to reform the law to explicitly prohibit physical punishment and other humiliating and degrading treatment of children.

**Jamaica:** In February 2014, Hazel Thompson-Ahye, Coordinator of the [Caribbean Coalition for the Abolition of Corporal Punishment of Children](#), called for prohibition of all corporal punishment to be included in amendments to the Child Care and Protection Act, in a national consultation on the revision of the Act.

**Guyana:** In November 2013, the [Society Against Sexual Orientation Discrimination](#) and the [Youth Coalition for Transformation](#) called for prohibition of corporal punishment in all settings during a Parliamentary Special Select Committee hearing. A new Education Bill and regulations under it are expected to be laid before the National Assembly in the current term; the national consultation on the draft Bill included the issue of school corporal punishment.

**Malaysia:** In the context of widespread media attention to the arrest in Sweden of two Malaysians for gross violation of integrity and assault of their four children, [Voice of the Children](#) and [Protect and Save the](#)

[Children](#) have [called](#) for prohibition of all corporal punishment. Both organisations are members of the Child Rights Coalition Malaysia, which frequently calls for prohibition including in its [report](#) to the Committee on the Rights of the Child.

**New Zealand:** Corporal punishment has been prohibited in all settings since 2007. In response to widely publicised comments by Conservative Party Leader Colin Craig about reintroducing legalised hitting of children, [UNICEF New Zealand](#) has published an [information sheet](#) which corrects some misleading claims, providing relevant and up-to-date national and international research as the basis for these corrections.

**Senegal:** In January 2014, in collaboration with the Ministry of Justice, several child rights organisations held a workshop on the validation of a plan of action on law reform to prohibit all corporal punishment. The national organisations called for a review of the Family Code, including article 285, which authorises corporal punishment of children. During the workshop, the representative of the Ministry of Justice, Mame Kaire Sow, stated that the review should make provisions for strong sanctions against perpetrators of corporal punishment. Workshop participants were also asked to raise public awareness on alternative methods of discipline.

**USA:** An interdisciplinary [forum](#), “Creating a Non-Violent Future: Children's Rights and Advances in Protection from Corporal Punishment”, which will focus on developing policy measures and a multi-dimensional strategic action plan for the United States, will be held 23 – 24 May 2014 in Chicago.

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## 3 HUMAN RIGHTS MONITORING

### New international complaints procedure for children comes into force

The [Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on a Communications Procedure](#) will come into force on 14 April 2014, making it possible for children in the states which have ratified it (currently Albania, Bolivia, Costa Rica, Gabon, Germany, Montenegro, Portugal, Slovakia, Spain and Thailand) to bring complaints about violations of their rights to the Committee on the Rights of the Child. The Global Initiative has produced a guide ([PDF/Word](#)) to using this and other international communications and inquiry procedures to challenge corporal punishment of children.

### Key decisions, reports and recommendations

The Committee on the Rights of the Child held its 65<sup>th</sup> session in Geneva, 13-31 January 2014, where it pressed states on their implementation of their obligations to prohibit and eliminate corporal punishment. In its concluding observations, the Committee welcomed the Holy See's statement that it would consider the proposal to ban corporal punishment but expressed concern that it has not enacted guidelines and rules banning it in Catholic schools, institutions and the home. The Committee reminded the Holy See that the Convention “leaves no room for any level of violence against children” and urged the Holy See to explicitly oppose all corporal punishment in childrearing, to amend Canon Law and Vatican City State laws to explicitly prohibit all corporal punishment, to establish mechanisms to enforce this ban in all Catholic schools and in the territory of Vatican City State, and use its authority to promote positive, non-violent childrearing and an interpretation of Scripture that does not condone corporal punishment. To the Russian Federation, the Committee recommended law reform to prohibit corporal punishment in all settings, particularly in the home and alternative care settings, as well as provision for enforcement mechanisms under the law, expanded awareness-raising and education programmes promoting positive, non-violent discipline. The Committee recommended to Yemen that corporal punishment be explicitly prohibited, including by adopting the draft amendments on the rights of the child, together with sustained public education and other measures to ensure elimination of corporal punishment in practice. Many of the states under review have already achieved prohibition in all settings, including the home. The Committee's

recommendations to Germany, Portugal and the Republic of Congo focused on implementation of the law. For further details see the Global Initiative's individual country reports for [Congo \(Republic\)](#), [Germany](#), [Portugal](#), [Russian Federation](#) and [Yemen](#), and the special report on the [Holy See](#).

The [report](#) of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights on "Access to justice for children" notes that "violence against children is... often considered as a fact of life rather than a rights violation that could be brought to court" (para. 15) and that human rights concerns which may arise in relation to customary and religious justice mechanisms include sanctions that are incompatible with human rights, such as corporal punishment. The report recommends that states ensure that children are protected from all forms of violence when coming into contact with the justice system. (United Nations Commissioner for Human Rights (2013), *Access to justice for children*, 16 December 2013 (A/HRC/25/35))

A [report](#) on "Ending Institutionalization in the Americas" by the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights (IACHR) notes that in some states, children in institutions are subjected to physical and other cruel and humiliating punishments, including being hit with sticks, forced to stay in uncomfortable positions and denied food, family visits and the chance to attend school. The report expresses the IACHR's concern that not all states in the region have prohibited corporal punishment of children in institutions and recommends prohibition of all corporal punishment. (Inter-American Commission on Human Rights (2013), *Derecho del niño y la niña a la familia. Cuidado alternativo. Poniendo fin a la institucionalización en las Américas*, OEA/Ser.L/V/II. Doc.54/13)

The report on the detailed finding of the commission of inquiry on human rights in the DPR Korea documents cruel and degrading treatment of children as of adults in the political prison camps, frequently imposed as punishment for the slightest mistake and inflicted in special punishment blocks – "Children are not spared from even the cruellest punishments" (para. 760). Also documented is the widespread infliction by state actors of physical punishment on children outside the political camps – including harsh physical punishment of children imposed in the guise of "discipline" during training for the Mass Games and beatings inflicted in the children's shelters to which street children are taken. (7 February 2014, *Report of the detailed findings of the commission of inquiry on human rights in the Democratic People's Republic of Korea* (A/HRC/25/CRP.1))

Two independent United Nations experts, Rashida Manjoo, the Special Rapporteur on violence against women and Frances Raday, the chairperson of the Working Group on the issue of discrimination against women in law and in practice have publicly [called](#) for states to abolish all judicial and administrative corporal punishment. The call was made in the context of a woman in Sudan being charged with dressing indecently or immorally for refusing to cover her hair with a headscarf, for which she could be sentenced to corporal punishment if found guilty. The experts called for her immediate release and for the Government of Sudan to review its legislation related to flogging. (*UN News Centre*, 6 November 2013)

In January 2014, the Global Initiative made a submission ([PDF/Word](#)) responding to the OHCHR's [call for information](#) relevant to the preparation of technical guidance on the application of a human rights-based approach to the implementation of policies and programmes to reduce and eliminate preventable deaths of children under five, in relation to Human Rights Council [resolution 24/11](#). Bringing together research into the prevalence and effects of corporal punishment, progress towards prohibition and coverage of the issue in international human rights law, the submission highlights that violent punishment is a significant contributor to the preventable deaths of young children and that promoting its prohibition in law and elimination in practice is an essential part of a human rights-based approach to the issue.

## **Briefing the human rights treaty bodies**

The Global Initiative regularly briefs human rights treaty monitoring bodies prior to examination of state parties which have not yet prohibited corporal punishment in all settings, 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: if you/your organisation are interested, please contact [info@endcorporalpunishment.org](mailto:info@endcorporalpunishment.org). Opportunities for briefing treaty bodies arise in relation to the Lists of Issues adopted for each state in advance of examination as well as in submitting information immediately prior to the examination of states by the Committees. The deadlines for submitting briefings relevant to upcoming sessions are set out below.

The Global Initiative is always willing to advise NGOs and human rights institutions on the practical details of how to submit briefings (email [info@endcorporalpunishment.org](mailto:info@endcorporalpunishment.org)).

#### *Committee on the Rights of the Child:*

(1) Session 69 Pre-Sessional Working Group (22-24 Sep 2014). The PSWG will adopt Lists of Issues for Ethiopia, Ghana, Mexico and Nepal: **the deadline for submitting briefings is 1 July 2014.**

(2) Session 70 Pre-Sessional Working Group (2-6- Feb 2015). The PSWG will adopt Lists of Issues for Bangladesh, Brazil, Central African Republic, Chile, Eritrea, France, Kazakhstan, Poland and United Arab Emirates: **the deadline for submitting briefings is 1 November 2014.**

#### *Committee Against Torture:*

(1) Session 52 (28 Apr – 23 May 2014). The Committee will examine Cyprus, Guinea, Holy See, Lithuania, Montenegro, Sierra Leone, Thailand and Uruguay: **the deadline for submitting briefings is 11 April 2014.**

(2) Session 53 (3-28 Nov 2014). The Committee will examine Australia, Burundi, Croatia, Kazakhstan, Serbia, Sweden, Ukraine, USA and Venezuela: **the deadline for submitting briefings is 17 October 2014.**

Adoption on the adoption of Lists of Issues is not yet available.

#### *Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights:*

(1) Session 52 (28 Apr – 23 May 2014)). The Committee will examine Armenia, China (incl. Hong Kong and Macau), Czech Republic, El Salvador, Indonesia, Lithuania, Monaco, Serbia, Ukraine and Uzbekistan: **the deadline for submitting briefings is 17 March 2014.**

(2) Session 53 Pre-Sessional Working Group (26-30 May 2014). The PSWG will adopt Lists of Issues for Gambia, Guatemala, Montenegro, Paraguay, Romania, Slovenia, Tajikistan and Viet Nam: **the deadline for submitting briefings is 26 March 2014.**

(3) Session 53 (10-28 Nov 2014). The Committee will examine Finland, Guatemala, Montenegro, Nepal, Portugal, Romania, Slovenia and Viet Nam: **the deadline for submitting briefings is 29 September 2014.**

(4) Session 54 Pre-Sessional Working Group (1-5 Dec 2014). The PSWG will adopt Lists of Issues for Chile, Ireland, Kyrgyzstan, Mongolia, Sudan, Thailand, Uganda and Venezuela: **the deadline for submitting briefings is 1 October 2014.**

#### *Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women:*

(1) Session 58 (30 Jun – 18 Jul 2014). The Committee will examine Central African Republic, Georgia, India, Lithuania, Mauritania, Peru, Switzerland and Syrian Arab Republic: **briefings should be submitted by 2 weeks before the session (exact date to be confirmed).**

(2) Session 60 Pre-sessional Working Group (21-25 Jul 2014). The PSWG will adopt Lists of Issues for Azerbaijan, Denmark, Ecuador, Eritrea, Gabon, Kyrgyzstan, Maldives and Tuvalu: **briefings should be submitted by 2 weeks before the session (exact date to be confirmed).**

(3) Session 59 (20 Oct – 7 Nov 2014). The Committee will examine Belgium, Brunei Darussalam, China (incl Hong Kong and Macau), Ghana, Guinea, Poland, Solomon Islands and Venezuela: **briefings should be submitted by 2 weeks before the session (exact date to be confirmed).**

(4) Session 61 Pre-Sessional Working Group (10-14 Nov 2014). The PSWG will adopt Lists of Issues for Bolivia, Croatia, Gambia, Namibia, St Vincent and the Grenadines, Senegal, Spain and Viet Nam: **briefings should be submitted by 2 weeks before the session (exact date to be confirmed).**

#### *Human Rights Committee:*

(1) Session 111 (7-25 Jul 2014). The Committee will examine Chile, Georgia, Ireland, Japan, Malawi and Sudan: **the deadline for submitting briefings is not yet published.**

(2) Session 111 Country Report Task Forces (7-25 Jul 2014). The Country Report Task Forces will adopt Lists of Issues for Cambodia, Cote d'Ivoire, Cyprus, France and Russian Federation, and Lists of Issues Prior to Reporting for Mexico and Poland: **the deadline for submitting briefings is not yet published.**

#### *Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities:*

(1) Session 2 Pre-Sessional Working Group (6-10 Oct 2014). The Committee adopt the List of Issues for Croatia, Czech Republic, Dominican Republic, Turkmenistan and UK: **the deadline for submitting briefings is 2 months before the session (exact date to be confirmed).**

## **The Universal Periodic Review**

The obligation to prohibit and eliminate corporal punishment of children continues to be raised with states in the Universal Periodic Review of their overall human rights records. The Global Initiative submits briefings on every state being reviewed, sharing advance draft briefings with relevant organisations to encourage submissions at national level. We also conduct a follow up programme, pursuing the issue with states that accept recommendations to prohibit corporal punishment by writing to key NGOs, NHRIs and Government ministers, and undertake ongoing analysis of coverage of the issue in all aspects of the UPR process (for further information email [info@endcorporalpunishment.org](mailto:info@endcorporalpunishment.org)).

The 18<sup>th</sup> session of the UPR took place in Jan/Feb 2014. Of the 14 states reviewed, three – Cyprus, New Zealand and Uruguay – have already achieved prohibition of corporal punishment in all settings including the home. Four of the other states received recommendations on the issue: Comoros, Dominican Republic, Slovakia and TFYR Macedonia. Governments' responses are due no later than June 2014.

The deadline for submitting briefings for the 20th session (Oct/Nov 2014) is **15 March 2014**: Angola, Bolivia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Egypt, El Salvador, Fiji, Gambia, Iran, Iraq, Italy, Kazakhstan, Madagascar, San Marino and Slovenia.

The deadline for submitting briefings for the 21<sup>st</sup> session (Jan/Feb 2015) is provisionally **1 June 2014**: Armenia, Grenada, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Guyana, Kenya, Kiribati, Kuwait, Kyrgyzstan, Lao PDR, Lesotho, Spain, Sweden and Turkey.

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## **4 RESEARCH AND REPORTS**

### **International reports**

A new UNICEF report "[The State of the World's Children 2014 in Numbers: Every Child Counts](#)", highlights the prevalence of violent punishment of children in more than 50 low- and middle-income countries, as well as revealing for the first time the average prevalence of violent punishment of children across two world regions. In West and Central Africa, on average 90% of children of children aged 2-14

experienced “violent discipline” (physical punishment and/or psychological aggression) in the home in the month prior to the surveys, carried out between 2005 and 2012. Across the Middle East and North Africa, the figure is 89%. The report highlights that “Many parents and caregivers still use physical punishment or psychological aggression as a way to correct children’s ‘misbehaviour’. Such practices violate children’s human rights.” (UNICEF (2014), *The State of the World’s Children 2014 in Numbers: Every Child Counts*, NY: UNICEF)

A [study](#) published in 2013 used nationally representative samples of 45,964 two- to nine-year-old children and their primary caregivers in 17 low- and middle-income countries, drawn from UNICEF’s Multiple Indicator Cluster Surveys carried out in 2005-2010, to provide the largest examination to date of the relationship between children’s cognitive, language, sensory and motor impairments and caregivers’ use of “violent discipline”. It found that children with disabilities were more likely to experience physical punishment and less likely to experience only non-violent discipline than children without disabilities. (Hendricks, C. et al (2014), “Associations Between Child Disabilities and Caregiver Discipline and Violence in Low- and Middle-Income Countries”, *Child Development*, published online 29 July 2013)

A [study](#) published in 2014 examined the relationships between women’s attitudes towards husbands hitting their wives, their attitudes towards corporal punishment of children and whether corporal punishment was inflicted on children in their household. The study used data from 85,999 mothers and caregivers of 2-14 year olds in 25 low- and middle-income countries. It found that women who believed husbands were justified in hitting their wives were more likely to believe corporal punishment is necessary to rear children and more likely to report that their child had experienced “violent discipline” (psychological aggression and/or physical punishment) in the home in the month prior to the survey than women who did not believe husbands were justified in hitting their wives. (Lansford, J. E. et al (2014), “Attitudes Justifying Domestic Violence Predict Endorsement of Corporal Punishment and Physical and Psychological Aggression towards Children: A Study in 25 Low- and Middle-Income Countries”, *The Journal of Pediatrics*, published online 9 January 2014)

The Human Rights Watch [“World Report 2014”](#), its 24th annual review of human rights violations around the globe, summarises key human rights issues in more than 90 countries and territories worldwide, drawing on events in 2012-2013. It highlights the legality and practice of corporal punishment in various countries and settings, including: corporal punishment in prison camps in the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea; “drug detention centres” in Cambodia (see also national research below) and Viet Nam; the family home in the United Arab Emirates; and judicial corporal punishment in Singapore and Sudan. (Human Rights Watch (2014), *World Report 2014*, NY: Human Rights Watch)

A new book by Murray Straus, [“The Primordial Violence”](#) (Routledge, 2013), brings together more than four decades of research about the negative effects of “spanking”. It features longitudinal data from more than 7,000 U.S. families as well as results from a 32-nation study and presents the latest research on the extent to which spanking is used in different cultures and the consequences of its use on children and on society.

## Regional reports

A major new report by the European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights, [“Violence against women: an EU-wide survey”](#), includes information on the prohibition of corporal punishment in many EU states and notes that some EU states are yet to prohibit corporal punishment of children in the family home and institutions. The report, which is based on a study which involved 42,000 women in all 28 EU states, discusses research showing the impact of prohibition and measures to raise awareness of and implement the legislation in reducing the use of corporal punishment. The study found that women who reported experiencing physical violence from an adult before the age of 15 were more likely to have experienced violence from a partner or others as an adult. The report suggests that prohibition of corporal punishment is a key factor in ending violence against women: “Considering the impact on victimisation in later life... full protection of children against violence is a key factor in breaking the cycle of violence” (p. 126). (European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights (2014), *Violence against women: an EU-wide survey – Main results*, Vienna: FRA)

A [study](#) involving more than 1,000 girls in Ghana, Kenya and Mozambique analysed the impact of ActionAid’s 2008-2013 project “Stop Violence Against Girls in School”. The study found that in 2013 the

use of some forms of corporal punishment had reduced since the baseline survey carried out in 2009. In Mozambique in 2009, 52% of girls had been whipped or caned in the past 12 months; by 2013, this had dropped to 29%. In Kenya in 2013, 55% of girls had been beaten in the past year, compared to 80% in 2009, although the proportion of girls who had been whipped in the past year increased from 50% in 2009 to 70% in 2013. In Ghana in 2013 there had been slight reductions in the proportions of girls experiencing most forms of corporal punishment since 2009. Girls' last experiences of corporal punishment usually took place in school. The study recommends prohibition of corporal punishment in schools and measures to implement the prohibition. (ActionAid International (2013), *Stop Violence Against Girls in School: A cross-country analysis of change in Ghana, Kenya and Mozambique*, Johannesburg: Action Aid)

## National research and reports

**Bangladesh:** In a 2013 [study](#), a nationally representative sample of 4,200 12-17 year olds was asked what they thought the role of political aspirants was in stopping corporal punishment in school. Eighty-one per cent of respondents said political aspirants should raise awareness and ensure teachers' accountability and 77% said political aspirants should ensure enforcement of the directive against corporal punishment. Children highlighted that many children stop going to school because of corporal punishment. (Ministry of Information (2013), *Children's Opinion Poll: Children's Views and Expectations from Political Aspirants and Leaders in Bangladesh*, UNICEF)

**Belgium:** A survey of 1,050 parents of children aged 6-18, carried out in September 2013, found that 57% of them thought it was acceptable to give their children a "pedagogical smack" on the buttocks. (Reported in *Het Nieuwsblad*, 14 October 2013)

**Cambodia:** A 2013 Human Rights Watch [report](#) documented severe physical punishment in "drug detention centres", where people who use drugs and others considered "undesirable" by the authorities – including children and adults living or working on the street – are detained. Punishments included beating, punching and kicking detainees, shocking them with electric batons and forcing them to do painful physical exercises such as crawling on the ground. (Human Rights Watch (2013) "*They Treat Us Like Animals*": *Mistreatment of Drug Users and "Undesirables" in Cambodia's Drug Detention Centers*, NY: HRW)

**Japan:** A Government survey of students at public, national and private schools and their parents found that in the 2012-2013 academic year, 6,721 teachers at 4,152 schools nationwide inflicted corporal punishment on 14,208 students. In 60% of cases, teachers hit students with their hands and in 10%, teachers kicked students. Other forms of corporal punishment included punching students and hitting them with a stick or other object. In 20% of cases, children were physically injured. Injuries included fractures, sprain and eardrum damage. (Reported in *The Japan Times*, 10 August 2013)

**Turkey:** A study involving 464 families, carried out by Hacettepe University Public Health Institute, found that 38.6% of parents thought corporal punishment could be used as a "last resort". Fifty-seven per cent of parents thought using physical force against children should be completely banned and 67.5% thought corporal punishment was "completely harmful" for children. (Reported in *The Daily News*, 20 November 2013)

**UK, Scotland:** A [study](#) which used data from 1,600 children living in Scotland, gathered between 2006 and 2009, found that children who had been "smacked" once or more times by their main caregiver by the time they were 22 months old were twice as likely to have emotional and behavioural problems when they were four as children who had not been smacked. The study controlled for child age and sex, caregiver age, sex, ethnicity, educational attainment and mental health status, sibling number, structural family transitions and socioeconomic status. (Scott, S. et al (2013), "Early parental physical punishment and emotional and behavioural outcomes in preschool children", *Child: Care, Health and Development*, doi:10.1111/cch.12061)

**UR Tanzania:** A [study](#) involving 409 children (average age 10.5 years) at a private school in Tanzania found that 95% of them had been physically punished at least once in their lifetime by a teacher. The same percentage reported experiencing physical punishment by parents or caregivers. The study found that the children's experience of corporal punishment was associated with increased aggressive and hyperactive behaviour and decreased empathetic behaviour. (Hecker, T. et al (2013), "Corporal punishment and children's

externalizing problems: A cross-sectional study of Tanzanian primary school aged children”, *Child Abuse & Neglect*, available online 17 December 2013)

**USA:** A 2013 [study](#) found that adults’ attitudes towards corporal punishment changed significantly after they read brief summaries of research on the negative effects of corporal punishment. The study involved a group of parents and a group of non-parents. Nearly three quarters of the non-parents and nearly half of the parents expressed less approval of “spanking” after reading the summaries. (Holden, G. et al (2013), “Research findings can change attitudes about corporal punishment”, *Child Abuse & Neglect*, published online 16 November 2013)

A new [report](#) analysed data on corporal punishment relating to the 2009-2010 school year, revealing that on average, 838 children experienced corporal punishment in public schools every day: the equivalent of one every 30 seconds. Black children were nearly two and a half times more likely to experience corporal punishment than White children, and nearly eight times more likely than Hispanic children. (Children’s Defense Fund (2014), *The State of America’s Children 2014*, Washington DC: Children’s Defense Fund)

In a [survey](#) of 2,286 adults carried out in 2013, 81% said it was sometimes appropriate for parents to “spank” their children and 19% said it was never appropriate. This represented a slight decline in approval of spanking compared to a similar poll in 1995, when 87% of respondents said it was sometimes appropriate. Two thirds (67%) of parents surveyed said they had spanked their child, compared to 80% in 1995. (Reported by *Harris Interactive*, 26 September 2013)

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## 5 CAN YOU HELP?

We welcome information on:

- current opportunities for promoting prohibition (new laws being drafted, bills being discussed, etc)
- organisations campaigning for prohibition and elimination of corporal punishment of children, or those which may be interested in doing so
- new research on the nature, prevalence and impact of corporal punishment
- resources for promoting positive discipline in homes, schools and other settings, especially those developed as part of a comprehensive campaign including for law reform

We also welcome volunteer translators (between English and any language).

If you can help with any of the above, email [info@endcorporalpunishment.org](mailto:info@endcorporalpunishment.org).

We hope you find this newsletter informative and useful and welcome your comments: email [info@endcorporalpunishment.org](mailto:info@endcorporalpunishment.org). The newsletter is sent 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, contact [info@endcorporalpunishment.org](mailto:info@endcorporalpunishment.org). If your organisation has not done so already, please consider signing up in support of prohibition of all corporal punishment (online at [www.endcorporalpunishment.org](http://www.endcorporalpunishment.org) or email [info@endcorporalpunishment.org](mailto:info@endcorporalpunishment.org)).

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*“How we treat those who are weak and defenceless is a marker of a civilised society.... Violence, both deliberate and directed and casual and unthinking and directed towards children especially, and by*

*extension the disruption to the life of family and society, violence, especially when it has the sanction of the state and the law behind it, is pandemic. Our hope is that whatever small steps we take such as this vigil, they are steps along the way to eliminating violence against children...*” Bishop of St Davids, Wyn Evans, speaking at the “End Legalised Violence Against Children” vigil at St Davids Cathedral, Wales, UK, February 2014