

Ending corporal punishment of children – a handbook for multi-religious gatherings

CNNV



Save the Children



Global Initiative to
End All Corporal Punishment
of Children

Published 2016 by:

CNNV

The Churches' Network for Non-violence was formed to broaden religious support for law reform to end corporal punishment and other cruel and degrading forms of violence against children and to challenge faith-based justification for it. CNNV aims to work with others towards developing a network of support, practical resources and information and to encourage religious communities to play an active role in the movement for reform.

<http://churchesfornon-violence.org>, info@churchesfornon-violence.org

Global Initiative to End All Corporal Punishment of Children

The Global Initiative was launched in Geneva in 2001. It aims to act as a catalyst to encourage more action and progress towards ending all corporal punishment in all continents; to encourage governments and other organisations to "own" the issue and work actively on it; and to support national campaigns with relevant information and assistance. The context for all its work is implementation of the Convention on the Rights of the Child. Its aims are supported by UNICEF, UNESCO, human rights institutions, and international and national NGOs.

www.endcorporalpunishment.org, info@endcorporalpunishment.org

Save the Children

Save the Children has made a significant contribution to the UN Study on Violence against Children, as well as to its follow up studies. Save the Children has been advocating for the prohibition of physical and humiliating punishment in all settings, including the home and has supported children and young people to consolidate and advocate key messages. In 1979 Save the Children contributed to Sweden becoming the first country to explicitly ban corporal punishment. It is currently working to highlight the issue of achieving legal ban and total elimination of physical and humiliating punishment and to put the issue on the political agenda around the world.

<http://resourcecentre.savethechildren.se>, info@rb.se

Acknowledgements

CNNV multi-religious reference group; Global Network of Religions for Children (GNRC) and World Vision; participants at the 2015 Parliament of Religions Salt Lake City, Utah 2015; UNICEF Iran.

Photos from The Church in Wales; Global Network of Religions for Children (GNRC) and World Vision; UNICEF Iran.

Prayers from Prayers for Peace and Justice, <http://hds.harvard.edu/life-at-hds/religious-and-spiritual-life/peace-and-justice/prayers-for-peace-and-justice> (pages 3 and 19) and World Healing Prayers, www.worldhealingprayers.com/6.html (page 29)

Design by Simon Scott.

Printed by The Russell Press Limited, Nottingham.

Contents

Foreword	2
Introduction	3
Corporal/physical punishment of children – its scale and impact.....	3
About this handbook.....	5
1 Building faith-based support for ending violence against children	7
Challenging traditional, cultural and religious attitudes which support violent punishment.....	7
Promoting children’s rights and dignity through multi-religious collaboration.....	8
Prohibition of corporal punishment of children – a key strategy towards ending other forms of violence.....	10
2 Promoting prohibition and elimination of corporal punishment through religious and spiritual observance	11
A pilgrimage dedicated to ending corporal punishment of children.....	12
A spiritual retreat dedicated to ending legalised violence against children.....	13
A vigil dedicated to ending legalised violence against children	15
A vigil dedicated to survivors of corporal punishment.....	19
An interfaith prayer breakfast dedicated to ending corporal punishment of children.....	22
Prayers, readings and blessings from the world religions.....	24
Prayers for individuals or collectives.....	30
3 Opportunities for advocacy and action	35
“Transforming Our World” – the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development	35
The Kyoto Declaration – 10th anniversary and beyond.....	38
Examples of religious action to end corporal punishment.....	50
Making a commitment.....	53
A Charter for religious communities	55
Appendices	57
1 A short guide to planning a multi-religious gathering.....	57
2 The Golden Rule.....	59
3 Online Resources	60



*Marta Santos Pais,
Special Representative
of the United Nations
Secretary General
on Violence against
Children*

Foreword

The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child is the world's most widely ratified human rights treaty and calls for a paradigm shift in the way a society considers and treats children. Since its adoption in 1989 it has been reinforced by three important protocols which consider critical areas of concern for the realisation of children's rights. Along with other international human rights standards, the Convention and its Optional Protocols provide a firm normative foundation to prevent and address violence against children in all its forms, including corporal punishment. This goal is now also reflected in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development which all nations have committed to pursue.

The Convention introduced a new vision of childhood, one where children are not passive recipients of charity or welfare services. They are subjects of rights and agents of change who should grow up in an environment characterised by an atmosphere of happiness, love and understanding. Many religions share this vision and the principles of respect for human dignity, compassion, justice, peace, equality, kindness and non-violence. These are principles which are incompatible with the use of corporal punishment against children.

While the normative foundation for children's rights has been built, millions of children are victims of violence every year around the world and legalised violence continues to hamper the promotion of children's equal right to respect for their human dignity and physical integrity. The figures are so daunting and disturbing that we may feel overwhelmed and tempted to look at violence as a fate. But we should not. As the UN Study on Violence against Children highlighted, "Violence is never justified and can always be prevented". 2016 is a very significant year for children as it marks the 10th anniversary of the UN Study and the 10th anniversary of "A Multi-religious Commitment to Confront Violence against Children" (the Kyoto Declaration).

In my work around the world I have witnessed the inspiring work of religious leaders. They have in-depth knowledge of community attitudes and customs and unique resources to reach out to communities and families and to promote the abandonment of harmful practices and of the violence that affects so many boys and girls.

This handbook is an important step in our common efforts to live up to the Kyoto Declaration, to promote the safeguard of children's rights and reach many of the targets in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, especially target 16.2 to end all forms of violence against children by 2030.

Journeying together, we can achieve a world of peace, free from fear and violence. It is indeed High Time to end violence against children, everywhere and at all times. The sum of all our forces will be zero. Zero violence against children. I am confident this new and important handbook will not only help to raise children's status and promote respect for them as rights holders, but will go a long way to ending corporal punishment of children.

Introduction

Corporal/physical punishment of children – its scale and impact

Corporal/physical punishment of children is a global problem which occurs in almost all societies. It is often deeply embedded in local cultures and traditions, and commonly used in both secular and religious communities.

Corporal punishment is a violation of a child's physical, emotional and spiritual integrity and it is clearly incompatible with religious and universal values of respect for human dignity, compassion, equity, justice, peace, equality and non-violence. But some religious groups misuse their religious teachings and sacred texts to justify and condone violent punishment of children.

We do not need evidence to tell us that corporal punishment is wrong and that it is a violation of a child's rights to grow and develop free from the fear of violent punishment but nevertheless the evidence is overwhelming – the impact of corporal punishment both in the long and short term can have a devastating effect on a person's life.

UNICEF'S statistical analysis of violence against children, "Hidden in Plain Sight" (2014) is the largest ever compilation of statistics on the subject of violence against children. The report sheds light on the prevalence of different forms of violence against children, with global figures and data from 190 countries. It describes how violence undermines children's lives and potential; damages their physical, psychological and emotional wellbeing, and in many cases ends their lives. The report highlights the shocking fact that **about 6 in 10 children between the ages of 2 and 14 worldwide are subjected to physical punishment by their caregivers on a regular basis.**

There are growing numbers of religious leaders and communities playing a vital role in the global movement to prohibit and eliminate corporal punishment in all its forms. With their spiritual leadership and moral standing they are well-placed to demonstrate respect for children and to challenge those who misuse their religious teachings to justify violent discipline.

The definition of corporal punishment adopted by the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child in 2006 is "any punishment in which physical force is used and intended to cause some degree of pain or discomfort, however light". The Committee, which is the monitoring body for the Convention on the Rights of the Child, also recognises non-physical forms of punishment which are harmful to children (see box). Ending corporal punishment of children means ending all corporal punishment and other humiliating and cruel forms of punishment in the home, alternative care settings, day care, schools, penal systems and places where children work.



Know that violence is the root cause of all miseries in the world. Violence in fact is the knot of bondage. "Do not injure any living being." This is the eternal, perennial, and unalterable way of spiritual life.

From the Jain Prayer of Peace

Defining corporal/physical punishment

“The committee defines corporal punishment as any punishment in which physical force is used and intended to cause some degree of pain or discomfort, however light. Most involves hitting (‘smacking’, ‘slapping’, ‘spanking’) children, with the hand or with an implement – a whip, stick, belt, shoe, wooden spoon, etc. But it can also involve, for example, kicking, shaking or throwing children, scratching, pinching, biting, pulling hair or boxing ears, forcing children to stay in uncomfortable positions, burning, scalding or forced ingestion (for example washing children’s mouths out with soap or forcing them to swallow hot spices). In the view of the Committee, corporal punishment is invariably degrading. In addition, there are other non-physical forms of punishment that are also cruel and degrading and thus incompatible with the Convention. These include, for example, punishment which belittles, humiliates, denigrates, scapegoats, threatens, scares or ridicules the child.”

UN Committee on the Rights of the Child, General Comment No. 8, para. 11

“Back in the period of the Study, we would hear people suggesting there are already enough laws protecting children – the problem lies elsewhere. This is wildly inaccurate – very few states yet have an adequate legal framework protecting children from all forms of violence. And it is disgracefully undermining of the rule of law. At times during the Study, and more recently in the context of my work as Chair of the International Commission of Inquiry into Syria, I have felt despairing about states’ and others’ inability to understand that insisting on full respect for human rights and rule of law is quite simply the only hope for human societies. We must insist on a clear and complete legal framework of prohibition as the essential foundation. How far a state has got in constructing such a legal framework is a clear sign of true commitment.”

(Paulo Sergio Pinheiro)

2016 is a significant year for children as it marks the 10th anniversary of the UN Secretary General’s Study on Violence against Children. It also marks the 10th anniversary of “A Multi-religious Commitment to Confront Violence against Children” (the Kyoto Declaration) which has been used as a resource and guide for multi-religious action to end violence against children. It has assumed added relevance for religious leaders working cooperatively with others on the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda, “Transforming Our World”, to “foster just and inclusive societies which are free from fear and violence”. The Agenda includes the target of ending all violence against children and, within this, ending physical punishment of children.

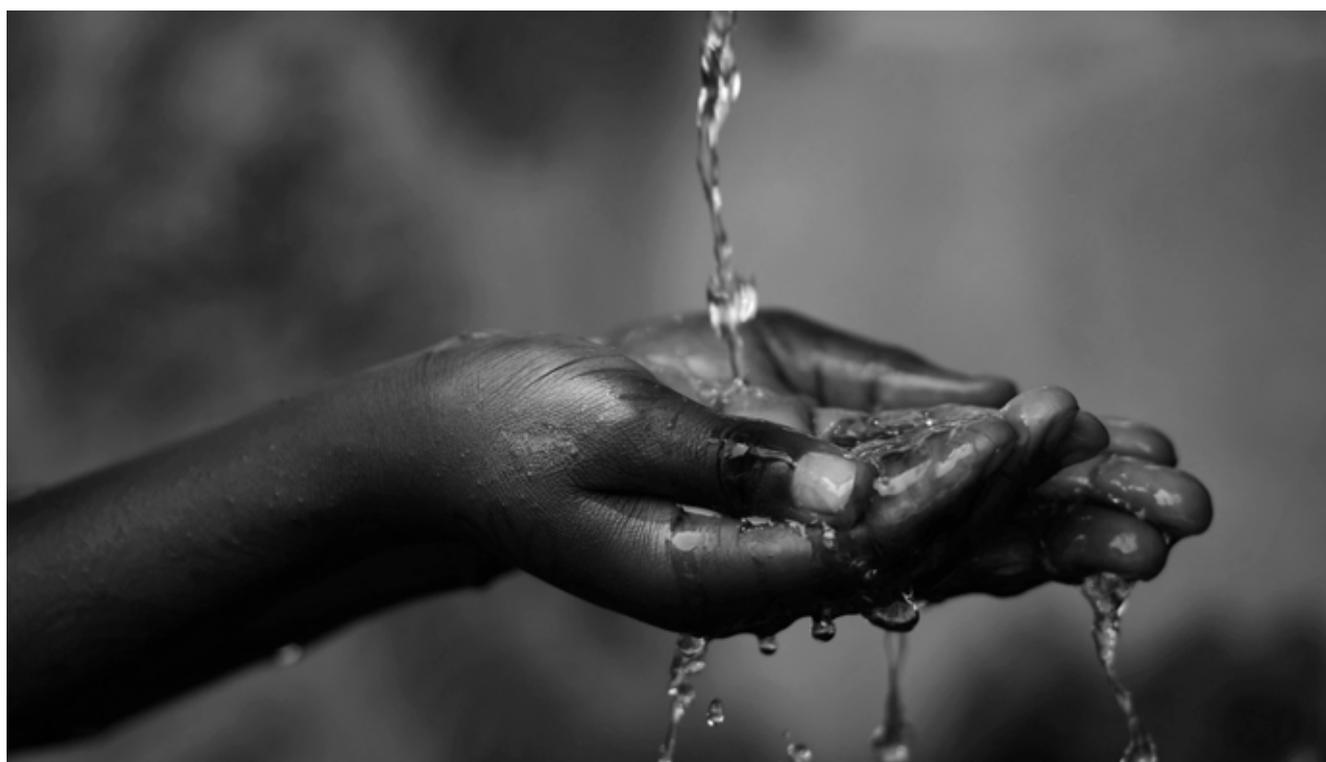
Since the report of the UN Study on Violence against Children was published in 2006 there has been considerable progress towards prohibition and elimination of corporal punishment. Now more than half of UN member states have prohibited corporal punishment of children in all settings, or are committed to doing so. By September 2016, 49 states had achieved a full ban and 57 states had made clear commitments to do so.

"This pain stays with you, you don't forget, it doesn't matter if you forgive the person – it stays with you"

Teenage boy

"With these two hands my mother holds me, cares for me. This I love. But with these two hands my mother hits me. This I hate."

Young girl, East Asia



1 Building faith-based support for ending violence against children



Challenging traditional, cultural and religious attitudes which support violent punishment

“To be faithful is not simply to repeat a tradition but to be creative in a new situation.... We must desacralize those traditions which cause harm.”

Dr William Vendley, Secretary General of Religions for Peace, speaking at a seminar, “Religious Ideals and Reality: Responsibility of Leadership to Prevent Violence against Children”, Geneva 27 August 2015

Trying to justify violent punishment of children with reference to faith-based tradition and religious teachings is not associated with any one religion or tradition: there is opposition to ending corporal punishment of children from a minority in all the major religions. Some religious traditions that condone violent punishment of children also consider it their duty to promote it as fundamental to their faith. But increasingly, religious leaders are challenging those who do so. Countering religious opposition involves being aware of the increasing global support for prohibiting and eliminating violent punishment of children and using it to build a strong base of religious support at all levels, thus making it possible for religious communities to play an active part in the movement for reform.

Peace and justice are often used as themes for faith-based action against violence in society – but peace and justice can never be achieved while corporal punishment of children remains acceptable, condoned and even promoted in the name of religion. Adherents of many of the world’s religions regard their deities or spirits as merciful, kind and loving but this is devalued by those who selectively use quotations from ancient texts to justify violence against children. Many religions share the core principles of respect for human dignity, compassion, justice, peace, equality, kindness and non-violence – all of which are incompatible with corporal punishment of children.

Religious leaders have a pivotal role to play in challenging those who seek to use their faith to justify violent punishment of children.

I’m absolutely convinced today that the way we raise our children is the chief cause of either peace or war among human beings. If we could somehow decree tomorrow that no children would ever again be subjected to the terror, the pain and the gross injustice of corporal punishment, physical abuse and violence from the adults in their lives, I believe we would have a peaceful world in one generation.

David Langness,
Bahá’í Teachings

For further information see <http://bahaiteachings.org/never-hit-a-child>

Suggested action

- Break the silence around violence against children through preaching, teaching and writing liturgies and prayers which promote respect for children. Use the resources in this handbook and adapt them for local use.
- Create opportunities for communities to reflect on religious teachings and principles which relate to the care and protection of children. Discuss how corporal punishment of children is incompatible with religious principles.
- Encourage religious communities to engage with others in the movement for reform.

Promoting children's rights and dignity through multi-religious collaboration

Multi-religious collaboration in this context brings together people of diverse religious affiliations to work together on a common platform towards promoting children's right to live with dignity, free from fear of violent punishment. Multi-religious collaboration helps diverse communities to work in solidarity, sharing their complementary strengths and insights and commitment to children. It also enables communities to share training, skills and resources, making them well-placed to partner with NGOs and government institutions in promoting children's rights.

Multi-religious collaboration means that people remain true to their own beliefs while respecting the rights of others to express their religious values and beliefs. It builds on the strengths of the different religious communities involved to increase mutual understanding and to build confidence and trust to overcome tensions and remove the barriers which lead to distrust.

Religious leaders have in-depth knowledge of community attitudes and customs. By sharing their expertise and resources they are in a unique position to challenge harmful practices against children.



The Inter-Religious Council for Peace in Tanzania (IRCPT)

The work of the Inter-Religious Council for Peace in Tanzania (IRCPT, <http://ircpt.or.tz>) illustrates what can be achieved through multi-religious cooperation. IRCPT is Tanzania's largest coalition of representatives of religious communities. It seeks to "mobilise unique moral and social resources in cooperative actions for peace" and has signed a pledge to end violence against children, including physical punishment.

The pledge includes a commitment to promote children's rights, build networks to respond to children at risk of abuse and violence, and provide safe havens for children who have been mistreated. The IRCPT is also committed to further promoting inter-religious cooperation to share experiences and practices in preventing violence against children.

For further information see:

<https://prayerandactionforchildren.org/images/events/205/docs/Commitment%20from%20Religious%20Leaders%20on%20VAC%20in%20Tanzania.pdf>

The IRCPT's engagement in national efforts to end violence against children is highlighted in Tanzania's "Multi-Sector National Plan of Action to prevent and respond to violence against children" (2013-2016). Religious Community Priority Responses (31 IRCPT) includes the following:

- Create greater awareness in the religious communities about the impact of all forms of violence against children.
- Promote the child as a person with rights and dignity.
- Use our religious teachings to provide good examples to influence behaviour change among adults to stop using violence in dealing with children.
- Preach non-violent forms of discipline in educating children.
- Work within our religious communities to build networks that can provide a front line of response to children at risk of abuse and violence and a place and person to go to when they are afraid or have been maltreated.
- Promote inter-religious cooperation and sharing experiences and practices in preventing violence against children.

For further information see:

www.togetherforgirls.org/wp-content/uploads/Tanzania_FINAL3_year_national_plan.pdf

Questions for discussion

- What is the scale and nature of violence against children in your community?
- How do local laws, customs and traditional practices affect the well-being and protection of girls and boys in the community?
- What is the status of girls and boys in the community?
- How are parents and teachers in the community supported and resourced for non-violent discipline?

Prohibition of corporal punishment of children – a key strategy towards ending other forms of violence

The expression “all forms of violence” is often used as an umbrella term to describe different forms of violence against children but it can have the effect of diluting efforts to prohibit specific forms of violence. People are often surprised that prohibition of corporal punishment should be a high priority when there are so many breaches of children’s rights and so many other forms of violence against children around the world – even though corporal punishment kills many children each year and injures millions more.

... 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 ... they are steps along the way to eliminating violence against children...

The Rt Revd Wyn Evans,
Bishop of St Davids,
speaking at a vigil
dedicated to “Ending
Legalised Violence
against Children” at St
Davids Cathedral, Wales,
UK, February 2014

The notion that children should endure everyday violations of their dignity and physical integrity in the guise of discipline must be challenged. The fact that corporal punishment is commonplace, socially approved and considered by many as part of normal parenting reveals a lack of regard and a deep disrespect towards children. It is difficult to comprehend that in many countries children are the only people singled out by law for less protection from violent punishment than adults expect for themselves. In too many countries, laws protect people from assault and violence *except when it is inflicted on a child in the guise of discipline.*

Legalised violence against children perpetuates children’s powerlessness and low status, leaving the way open to other forms of violence and exploitation against children. Challenging corporal punishment of children promotes children’s equal right to respect for their human dignity and physical integrity. This is fundamental to raising children’s status and promoting respect for children as rights holders.

Prohibition of corporal punishment by law is an essential strategy for ending all forms of violence against children. It recognises children’s right to respect for their human dignity and physical integrity. It makes it clear to all people working with and caring for children that hitting a child is no more lawful than hitting anyone else. Importantly, an active campaign for law reform challenges the way in which children are regarded and promotes children as people in their own right.

Some still argue that public education and positive parenting alone are sufficient to change behaviour. But children should not have to wait until societal attitudes change for their right to live free from physical punishment. Law reform alone is not enough but it is necessary. For as long as the law says it’s permissible to hit children, child protection measures and education for positive, non-violent parenting will be undermined. Unless corporal punishment is explicitly prohibited child protection policies will not be fully effective.

In order to make a difference in children’s daily lives legislation should be accompanied by implementation strategies and public education to raise awareness of children’s rights, to inform adults about the dangers of corporal punishment and to provide information on positive, non-violent forms of discipline.

2 Promoting prohibition and elimination of corporal punishment through religious and spiritual observance



Religious communities are increasingly speaking with one voice about issues of injustice against children and many demonstrate their concern and promote action during religious observances such as vigils, guided spiritual retreats, prayer breakfasts and pilgrimages. Some of the reasons for growth in multi-religious activity may be attributed to greater appreciation of the world's spiritual traditions, shared respect for the inherent dignity of the child and a desire to promote children's human rights.

The success of a multi-religious observance depends on mutual understanding between different spiritual and religious traditions. This involves developing awareness and understanding of the customs, cultural practices, forms of address and language used by the diverse traditions represented.

A brief guide to planning multi-religious gatherings and events can be found on page 57.





A pilgrimage dedicated to ending corporal punishment of children

A multi-religious pilgrimage dedicated to ending violence against children enables people of different faiths to journey together for a common purpose. It can help develop mutual understanding and, through guided discussion and reflection, clarify interpretations of scripture and teachings about children and non-violence. It can be an effective way of beginning the process of forming partnerships and taking action towards ending corporal punishment of children.

Pilgrims may choose to walk through towns or open spaces or visit significant landmarks, holy places or shrines. Religious houses, churches, mosques, temples and meeting places may offer hospitality and a place for reflection on the way. Pilgrims may wish to highlight the role of government and law-makers and make a symbolic stop at the parliament building.

At each stop pilgrims from different traditions can increase understanding by reading from their scriptures and teachings about children and non-violence. Blessings, prayers and mantras which focus on ending violence against children, may be offered by different religious traditions.

Placards and banners displaying messages about children and non-violence from different religious perspectives may be carried to create awareness along the way. A public vigil or candle lighting ceremony may be held at the close of the pilgrimage or use the posters designed to accompany this handbook at www.churchesfornon-violence.org.

Pilgrimages can also take the form of an inward, spiritual journey and some religious traditions prefer to meditate and reflect on issues privately or make a journey alone or in small groups.

A prayer for a pilgrimage

We bless this day and all that our journey unfolds.
We bless the ground beneath our feet and the air we breathe.
We open our hearts and focus our thoughts on all children
who suffer the humiliation and pain of violent punishment.
May we be inspired to work in harmony
May we be strengthened to make bold decisions
May we be empowered to be instruments of justice for all children.

*Prayers from pages 24-34 may also be used at each stop
The pledge on page 49 may be signed at the conclusion of the pilgrimage*

A spiritual retreat dedicated to ending legalised violence against children

A spiritual retreat provides an opportunity to step back from the normal routine and pressures of life and through prayer, meditation and discussion allow time for fresh thinking. It provides time and space to stop, listen, reflect and focus on how best to take action to end corporal punishment of children. A retreat can last for a single day or longer and it can be followed with a meeting to discuss a plan of action.

Retreats can include guided meditation, prayer, artistic expression, silent reflection and discussion.

A brief guide for a retreat on the Golden Rule

Introduction

The Golden rule is one of the most universally accepted values, shared by religious traditions, humanists, indigenous communities and secular traditions.

The Golden Rule is best interpreted as: "Treat others as you would like to be treated in the same situation." To apply it we are to imagine ourselves in the place of the person on the receiving end of our actions and to understand the effect of our actions on others. The Golden Rule is a pathway for treating others well but to apply it we require compassion and imagination. It can be an effective starting point for developing understanding and learning from people of different religious and spiritual traditions – and from those with no religious affiliation.

The Golden Rule can set a common standard for the values of fairness, justice, equality, compassion and non-violence that lie at the heart of morality and diverse traditions. It provides a strong basis for working with others towards the prohibition and elimination of corporal punishment of children.

At the centre of the Golden Rule is the concept that all human beings are equally important.

Opening thoughts

We have set aside this time to study the Golden Rule and reflect on how we can use it as a guide for working together to end legalised violence against children.

May we open our minds to all the possibilities this retreat affords. Violence against the world's children does untold harm in the short and long term and we are compelled to confront the injustice and inequality at its heart.

Let us be advocates for children and inspire our politicians and leaders to make the right decisions so that all children may live in hope of achieving justice and peace.

Provide all retreatants with a copy of the Golden Rule (on page 59) and allow time for participants to read it from the perspectives of the world's religious and spiritual traditions.

A short period of silent reflection

Suggestions for discussion

- How are children regarded in society?
- How can the Golden Rule be used to change attitudes towards children?
- What else can be done to raise children's status in the community?
- What steps can be taken to promote respect for children in society at large?

A short period of silent reflection

Suggestions for discussion

- Discuss how corporal punishment of children is incompatible with the Golden Rule and the religious teachings and tenets of the faith traditions of those present.
- Discuss ways of presenting your findings to the wider religious community.

Prayer

We are called to view life from the perspective of others and to honour all people.

May we grow in kindness, compassion and gentleness as we each follow the teachings of our faith.

May we apply the Golden Rule to our daily lives and treat children as we would like to be treated in the same situation.

Liturgies and prayers from pages 15-34 may also be used



A vigil dedicated to ending legalised violence against children

Introduction

A candlelight vigil can be held as a public demonstration of faith, solidarity and commitment towards ending legalised violence against children. It can be held in a public place – either inside or outdoors and it can be open to everyone including civic representatives. A vigil can help to create awareness of the scale and impact of corporal punishment on children’s lives and foster a sense of unity and resolve to bring about change. A vigil can also mark an act of dedication and launch a campaign or movement for change. The following order of service can be freely adapted for local needs.

See page 57 for “A short guide to planning a multi-religious gathering”.

THE GREETING

Leader: Welcome to this vigil dedicated to ending legalised violence against children. We may hold different religious beliefs, spiritual paths and traditions but we are united in our respect for the human dignity of all children and steadfast in our commitment to end the everyday violence that countless children endure.

Throughout the world children are suffering as a result of corporal punishment and other cruel and degrading treatment. We have gathered here conscious of our responsibility to create communities where children are nurtured and protected and where children’s views are respected and valued.

As a mark of commitment, representatives of different religions may be invited to display symbols from their different traditions such as banners, sacred objects or texts.



LISTENING TO CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

Children and young people may be invited to deliver messages and ideas about ending violence against children. They may prefer to speak or present a message using art, drama, mime or verse.

Leader: Let us give thanks for children and the contributions they make to our society.

All: May we listen respectfully to children's views and learn from them, and let us put children's recommendations for non-violence into action.

AN ACT OF REMEMBRANCE FOR CHILDREN WHO HAVE SUFFERED VIOLENCE

Leader: The children of the world cry out to us to end violence against them.

Guided by compassion, justice, kindness and respect for all children and inspired by our different spiritual traditions and beliefs, we come together to commit ourselves to working with others to end all legalised violence against children.



CANDLE LIGHTING



All: We light these candles to remember children everywhere.

Leader: We remember with sadness all children who are not respected.

All: We give thanks for those who uphold children's rights and human dignity.

Leader: We remember all children who have suffered the pain, injustice and humiliation of corporal punishment and other violent treatment.

All: We give thanks for those who protect children.

Leader: We remember all children who bear the pain of broken relationships because of family violence.

All: We give thanks for those who give comfort and help to children and families in need.

Leader: We remember all children who have been silenced and intimidated by people in power and left to carry the burden of violent punishment.

All: We give thanks for those who support children, listen to them and learn from them.

Leader: We remember all children who are not informed of their human rights.

All: We give thanks for those who care for children and help them to understand their value.

Leader: We remember all children who are lonely, frightened and affected by violence.

All: We give thanks for those who help children to live their lives free from fear of violent punishment and help them to face the future with confidence and hope.

Leader: We remember all children whose community, culture or tradition justifies and condones violent punishment.

All: We give thanks to those who work towards reforming laws so that children can live their lives free from fear of violence.

AN ACT OF DEDICATION

We commit ourselves to working with children and others to prohibit corporal punishment and all forms of violence against children. If we want a just and peaceful world we must treat all children and young people with gentleness, compassion and respect.

Representatives from different religions are invited to offer their own words of dedication on behalf of their communities.

BLESSINGS

A relevant prayer, blessing or reading may be given from each tradition.

Prayers from pages 24-34 may also be used

CLOSING WORDS

May peace be with us;
may justice enfold us;
may compassion move us;
may love surround us.
May the light that shines through our traditions
be our beacon, inspiration and guide.



*Chinese calligraphy for
peace*



A vigil dedicated to survivors of corporal punishment

See page 57 for “A short guide to planning a multi-religious gathering”

GREETINGS

A short greeting may be given from representatives of different traditions.

We have gathered together in this place out of deep concern for all those whose childhoods have been affected by corporal punishment in homes, schools, institutions, faith-based organisations and in the wider community.

Whether disguised as discipline or sanctioned by the state, corporal punishment of children is contrary to the teachings of our religious traditions – all of which profess respect for children and non-violence.

Children throughout the world live in fear of commonplace and normalised violence and many adults continue to suffer from childhoods blighted by the trauma and humiliation it has caused.

We who speak of peace and justice and profess non-violence cannot stand by while the youngest members of our society learn from adults that violence is the way to solve problems. We stand in solidarity with all who have suffered from childhoods scarred by violence and we pledge to work together towards ending all corporal punishment of children.

May those who are frightened cease to be afraid, and may those who are bound by the past be free. May the powerless find power and may people befriend one another. May those who find themselves in trackless, fearful wildernesses – the children, the aged, the unprotected – be guarded by beneficent celestials, and may they swiftly attain Buddhahood.

A Buddhist Prayer
for Peace



PRAYERS

Leader: Let us remember all who have suffered from corporal punishment and other forms of violence.

All: May we open our hearts to the cries of those who suffer from the trauma of violent treatment.

Leader: Let us remember those whose accounts of childhood mistreatment have been silenced and not believed.

All: May we listen to our sisters and brothers with respect and kindness and may we be instruments of justice and non-violence.

Leader: Let us respond to our calling to administer justice and mercy.

All: May we see children through eyes enlightened by understanding and compassion.

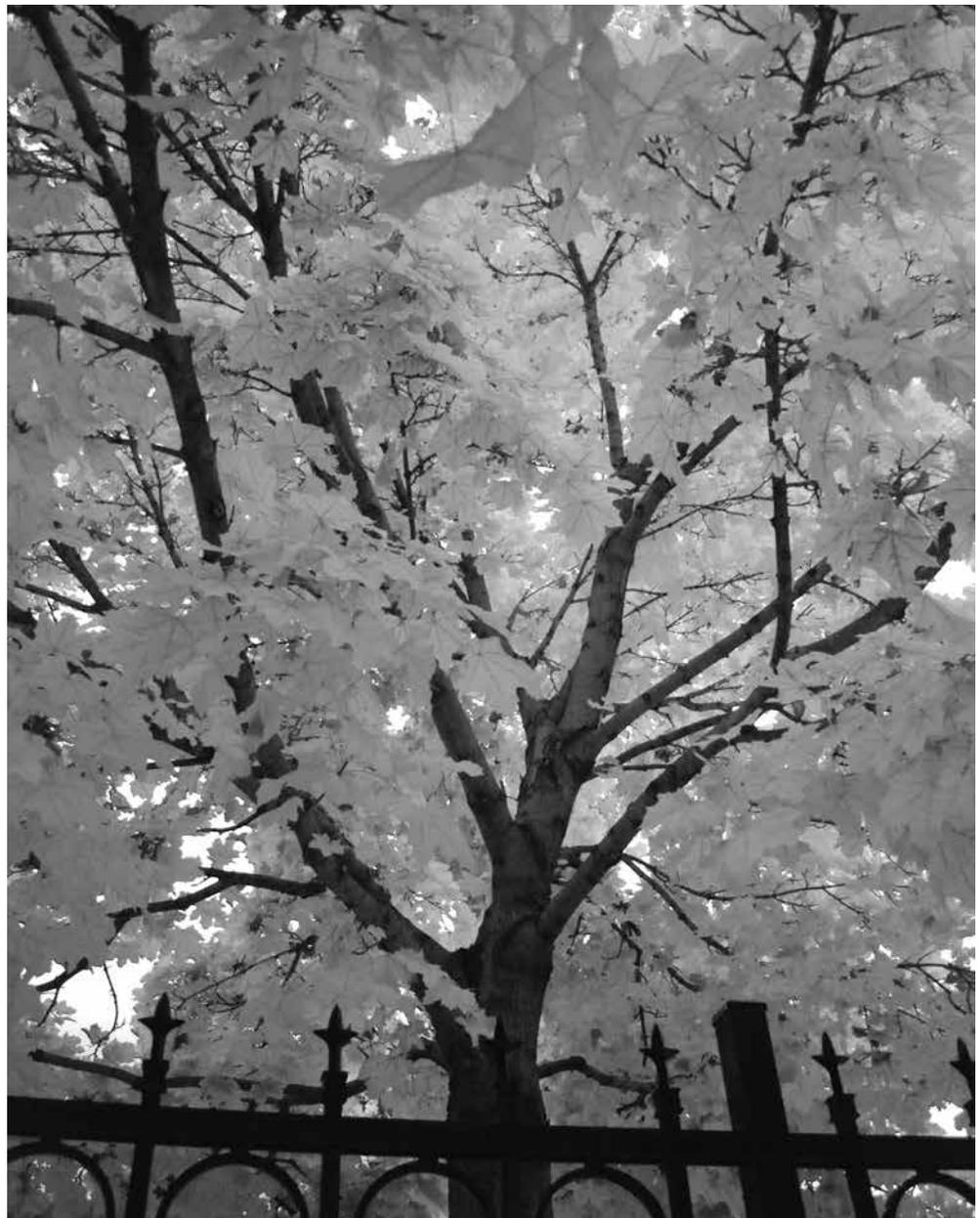
During a homily at a morning mass in the Vatican, Pope Francis expressed sorrow for the sins and grave crimes of clerical sexual abuse committed by priests

"There is no place in the Church's ministry for those who commit these abuses, and I commit myself not to tolerate harm done to a minor by any individual, whether a cleric or not.

"I beg your forgiveness ... for the sins of omission on the part of Church leaders who did not respond adequately to reports of abuse made by family members, as well as by abuse victims themselves. This led to even greater suffering on the part of those who were abused and it endangered other minors who were at risk."

Reported in The
Guardian newspaper
(UK) 7/7/2014

[www.theguardian.com/
world/2014/jul/07/pope-
francis-catholic-bishops-
child-paedophile-abuse-
priest-condemn](http://www.theguardian.com/world/2014/jul/07/pope-francis-catholic-bishops-child-paedophile-abuse-priest-condemn)



CANDLE LIGHTING

We know that with grace and trust in each other we can work together in harmony to end the cycle of pain and suffering of children who endure violent punishment at the hands of those who should love and protect them. We light these candles to remember all who have suffered corporal punishment in childhood and we affirm each of our faith traditions as paths of non-violence.

Representatives from each tradition may come forward to light a candle. Each person may name their faith tradition as a path to non-violence.



*Japanese calligraphy
for harmony*

Leader: As religions of justice we must work with others to end state sanctioned corporal punishment of children.

All: May the light of the Divine be our inspiration and guide

Leader: As religions of compassion we must protect and care for those who have suffered the consequences of child abuse

All: May the light of the Divine be our inspiration and guide

Leader: As religions of peace we must work tirelessly to prohibit corporal punishment by law.

All: May the light of the Divine be our inspiration and guide

Leader: As we strive for a peaceful, just and compassionate world

All: May the light of the Divine be our inspiration and our guide

CLOSING PRAYERS

God of Justice

We pray for grace, sensitivity and wisdom
to support those who have suffered the injustice and humiliation
of childhood violence.

May our communities create opportunities for people
to reveal their struggles and expose the harmful actions of others.
May we support them in their quest for justice and peace of mind
and be present when support and friendship is needed.

Divine Protector

Bless all survivors of childhood violence.
Give comfort to those who suffer confusion and distress.
Heal their wounds and free them from fear and loneliness.
We know the path to recovery is long and winding
but we pray that they may be empowered to seek justice,
strengthened to face the future with hope
and restored to fullness of life.

*Blessings may be given from each of the different religious traditions
represented.*

An interfaith prayer breakfast dedicated to ending corporal punishment of children

Prayer breakfasts have a long tradition and are becoming an increasingly popular way of deepening ties between different religious traditions. They are sometimes organised as an annual event such as national prayer breakfasts or they may be held to commemorate a special occasion or launch an event. At the local level they provide opportunities to reach out to others, to engage in community building and to strengthen ties and build trust. Increasingly, they are held to develop a sense of unity of purpose for social action.

The prayer breakfast can be held on neutral ground and planned and hosted by the local multi-faith council or faith-based organisations or planned by individual representatives from different traditions. In addition to being aware of the customs and practices of the religious traditions represented, it is important to be aware of the dietary practices of different faiths and the way food is served. (For information on “Catering and Faith-based Practice” see www.interfaith.org.uk/resources/briefing-notes/94-catering-and-faith-based-dietary-practice/file)

“The role of multi-religious collaboration is essential to bring together people of different faiths joining on a common platform and using their authoritative voice to promote children’s right to a life with dignity, where fear and violence have no place, and to prevent the misuse of religious teachings and sacred texts to justify or condone any violent punishment of children”

Marta Santos Pais, 2016

There is no official format for a prayer breakfast but the following suggestions can be used as a guide:

- A message of welcome
- Greetings and prayers are offered from representatives of different traditions
- Breakfast
- Speakers focus on ending corporal punishment of children
- Participants’ reflections
- Participants make an act of dedication or sign a pledge
- A statement can be made about the way forward
- Close with prayers and blessings

Interfaith prayer breakfast in Santa Domingo

On 19 November 2015 the Global Network of Religions for Children and the NGO Coalition for Children in the Dominican Republic marked the 26th anniversary of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child and the World Day of Prayer and Action for Children with an interfaith breakfast in Santa Domingo to engage with religious and spiritual leaders. The event concluded with a declaration by religious and spiritual leaders:

“We reject all forms of violence against children and adolescents, including corporal punishment, and commit to taking the lead in working with other sectors of society, communities, religious networks, NGOs, government agencies and the Congress to ban corporal punishment of children in all settings.”



Prayers, readings and blessings from the world religions

Bahá'í Prayer

These children are the plants of Thine orchard,
the flowers of Thy meadow,
the roses of Thy garden.
Let Thy rain fall upon them;
let the Sun of Reality shine upon them with Thy love.
Let Thy breeze refresh them
in order that they may grow and develop
and appear in the utmost beauty.
Thou art the Giver.
Thou art the Compassionate.
Abdu'l-bahá



Buddhist parents welcome a new baby at a baby blessing ceremony

My dear child

As your parents, we welcome you to this new life and wish you everything good in it. Even though we were strangers not long ago – we do not know who you were just two years ago – we love you. We will do our best to provide for you materially, give you a good education, and care for you in all circumstances.

As your parents, we will have a caring relationship and communicate well with each other, for we know that is the best way to let you know that this world is a loving place. We will live ethically so that you will learn good habits from observing how we live. We will work to subdue our anger and to learn good skills for resolving conflicts so that you will have good role models for this. We will smile, laugh, and share our affection so that you will feel comfortable doing the same.

The ceremony in full is available at

<http://thubtenchodron.org/2011/06/children-in-dharma-community/>



A reading from The Holy Bible

The disciples came to Jesus and asked, "Who is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven?" He called a child whom he put among them, and said, "Truly I tell you, unless you become like children, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven. Whoever becomes humble like this child is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven. Whoever welcomes one such child in my name welcomes me." Then little children were brought to him in order that he might lay his hands on them and pray. The disciples spoke sternly to those who brought them; but Jesus said, "Let the little children come unto me, and do not stop them; for it is to such as these that the kingdom of heaven belongs." And he laid his hands on them and went on his way.

Matthew 18:1-5; 19: 13-15 New Standard Revised Version



Jain Prayer for peace

Peace and Universal Love is the essence of the Gospel preached by all Enlightened Ones.
The Lord has preached that equanimity is the dharma.
Forgive do I creatures all and let all creatures forgive me.
Unto all have I amity, and unto none enmity.
Know that violence is the root cause of all miseries in the world.
Violence, in fact, is the knot of bondage.
"Do not injure any living being."
This is the eternal, perennial, and unalterable way of spiritual life.
A weapon, howsoever powerful it may be can always be superseded by a superior one; but no weapon, can however, be superior to non-violence and love.



Jewish Blessings for Children

It is traditional in the Jewish faith for parents to bless their children on each Shabbat (Sabbath – Jewish day of prayer) and on holidays.

For **girls**, the introductory line is:

May you be like Sarah, Rebecca, Rachel, and Leah.

הָאֵלֹהִים לְחַר הַקֶּבֶר הַרְשֵׁכ מִיְהִלָּא רְמִישִׁי.

For **boys**, the introductory line is:

May you be like Ephraim and Menashe.

הֶשְׁנַמְכוּ מִיְרַפְּאָכ מִיְהִלָּא רְמִישִׁי.

For both boys and girls, the rest of the blessing is:

“May God bless you and guard you. May the light of God shine upon you, and may God be gracious to you. May the presence of God be with you and give you peace.”

The words of the blessing are taken from the priestly blessing (Numbers 6:24-26)

See more at: www.reformjudaism.org/practice/prayers-blessings/shabbat-and-holiday-blessings-blessing-over-children#sthash.i0QGqkHs.dpuf





*Sanskrit calligraphy for
Aum (Om) sacred sound
and mantra*

Hindu Peace Mantra

This mantra is followed by the phrase "Om shanti, shanti, shanti". The word "shanti" means "peace" in Sanskrit.

Asatoma sad gamaya
Tamaso ma jyotir gamaya
Mrityor ma amritam gamaya

Lead me from untruth to truth;
lead me from darkness to the light;
lead me from mortality to immortality.
Om shanti, shanti, shanti

A Native American Prayer for Peace

O Great Spirit of our Ancestors, we raise the pipe to you
and to your messengers of the four winds
and to Mother Earth, who provides for your children.
Give us the wisdom to teach our children to love,
to respect, to be kind to each other
so that they may grow with peace of mind.
Let us learn to share all the good things
that you provide for us on earth.



Muslim Hadiths

“Nothing a parent may award his (or her) child is better than a good upbringing.”

Al-Timidhi, Ktab al-Birr wa al-Silah 4.338, Hadith 1952

“He is not one of us who shows no mercy to our young”

Al-Timidhi, Ktab al-Birr 4/322, Hadith 1921



*Arabic calligraphy for
Allah O Protector*

The Prophet’s Prayer

O God, illuminate our hearts with light,
our eyes with light and our ears with light;
and let there be light on our right and light on our left.
let there be light above us and light below us;
let there be light in front of us and behind us.
O God make us a light.

Sikh scriptural references to children

Pale balek vag de kar. “God cherishes all children, and reaches out with God’s hand.”

Siri Guru Granth Sahib, p. 957

Sikh prayer for peace

Lord, teach us to make peace with all that surrounds us.
May we reflect on the meaning and shape of our universe
and nurture it with prayer, sacrifice
and inspirations of great souls.
May our labours and prayers converge to create a beautiful canopy
of dignity, equality, justice and friendship,
for all living beings under the heavens to prosper in peace.
K.P. Singh inspired by Rabindranath Tagore



Prayers for individuals or collectives

Model justice and respect

May our religious leaders model respect, justice and compassion and guide us in reading and interpreting the sacred scriptures and teachings of our faith, to promote respect for children. And may all children live their lives free from the fear of violence.

For leaders

We pray for all who bear the responsibility and privilege of leadership.

We pray that they may be endowed with wisdom and resolve to promote the cause of peace and justice for children.

Let them with due diligence, protect children from violence in their homes, schools and communities.

Religious leaders as advocates for children

We give thanks for all who use their spiritual leadership to promote respect for children and protect them from harm.

May they use their influence and moral authority to promote non-violence

at home and in wider society – so that children and adults enjoy creative, non-violent relationships with one another.

Justice, compassion and peace

As religions of justice we will work with others to end state sanctioned violence against children.

May the light of the Divine be our inspiration and guide

As religions of compassion we will protect and care for those who have suffered violence.

May the light of the Divine be our inspiration and guide

As religions of peace we will work tirelessly to counter religious justification for violent punishment of children.

May the light of the Divine be our inspiration and guide

A prayer for teachers

Help us to teach the girls and boys in our care
with understanding and compassion
not with fear, threats and coercion.
Let us remember that discipline is about teaching children
through our good example
not through the humiliation and pain of corporal punishment.
Let us foster a culture of equality and mutual respect and speak out
against discrimination and stereotyping.
Let us treat all children kindly, listen to their views and ideas
and imbue them with a joy of learning.

For those who work with children and families

May all those who work with children and families
do so with kindness and compassion.
Grant them courage and commitment
to speak out against mistreatment and neglect.
Give them strength and resolve to be advocates for children.
And imbue them with wisdom and understanding
to be messengers of hope and healing to those in need.



For our law-makers

We remember our law-makers and all who have been called to serve our communities with truth and justice.
May they give hope to all who are oppressed
May they walk in the paths of wisdom and compassion to end state sanctioned violence against children.

Called to be peacemakers

We are called to be peacemakers
and to promote the message of non-violence
that lies at the heart of each of our traditions.
We are profoundly sorry that our communities
have betrayed this central message of our faith
through acts of violence and spiritual abuse against children.
We resolve to make amends
and to be messengers of hope, justice and peace
to children at home, in school and in our neighbourhoods.

The birth of a baby

We rejoice at the birth of this baby
and all the possibilities that a new life brings.
As we stand in awe of creation
and its capacity to renew all things,
let us reject all harmful traditions and punishments.
And may we gently guide this little child
in the ways of kindness, compassion and peace.



A prayer for those who have been abused in religious institutions

We pray for the many children who have suffered violence at the hands of those who profess a religious belief. Countless children have been ignored and betrayed through denial and silence in religious institutions. Instead of protecting vulnerable children perpetrators have sought ways of protecting themselves and the religious institutions they represent. May those in power use their authority to protect the children entrusted to their care. Let them bring to justice and repentance all those who have committed crimes of violence against children. And let us work together to bring peace, comfort and hope to all children who have suffered childhood violence.

For those who continue to suffer from childhood abuse

We want to recover from the painful memories of a violent childhood and to experience wholeness and peace. But the fear and mistrust we felt as children has blighted our adult relationships. We have lacked the courage and strength to speak out and seek help and we have denied the harmful effects of being hit and humiliated as children. Give us strength, hope and resolve to seek help to overcome our adversities and live life in all its fullness.

For parents who have physically punished their children

We ask forgiveness for those of us who have physically punished our children; we look back on our actions with sadness and regret. We are deeply sorry for the pain, humiliation and distress we have caused our children and we are deeply sorry for betraying their love and trust. As parents we are our children's protectors, guides and role models. Grant us grace to repair our broken relationships and let us commit ourselves to loving and nurturing our children.

Living free from fear

Help us to send love into lives ruled by fear; comfort those who are wounded by violence; speak gently to those troubled by painful memories and sow seeds of peace in their hearts.



Taking the lead from children

We give thanks for all children and the contributions they make to families, schools and society. Let us listen to children and learn from them; Let us open our minds and let children take the lead. And let us strive to model non-violence, justice and compassion.

Transforming Our World

We pray for all children who are deprived of the joy of living and learning because of the fear of violent punishment. Let us end the silence that condones violence against children and the laws that perpetuate it. We know that it is impossible to achieve justice and peace while countless children suffer violence at the hands of those who should care for them. Inspire us to work together with all our strength to transform our world and make it fit for children and may no child be left behind.



3 Opportunities for advocacy and action



The following provide opportunities for religious leaders and communities to join with others in realising the aims of these initiatives.

“Transforming Our World” – the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development

This seeks to build on the Millennium Development Goals and complete what these did not achieve.

The 2030 Agenda affirms that “there can be no sustainable development without peace and no peace without sustainable development”. It draws together the elements of peace, the rule of law, human rights, development and equality into a forward-looking framework.

The 17 Goals and 169 targets are integrated and indivisible and balance the three dimensions of sustainable development - economic, social and environmental. Prohibition and elimination of corporal punishment of children is a crucial part of achieving target 16.2 and other key goals and targets and is essential to the vision of “a world free of fear and violence”.

The Goals and targets will stimulate action in the coming years in areas of critical importance for humanity. All countries and all stakeholders will form collaborative partnerships to implement the plan. The values underpinning the Sustainable Development Goals reflect the values of the world’s major religions and many religious leaders have already endorsed the 2030 Agenda. They are well placed to create bridges of understanding and cooperation and to ensuring the inclusion of otherwise excluded and isolated groups and communities.

For further information see <https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/post2015/transformingourworld>



The Global Partnership to End Violence Against Children



endviolence

global partnership to end violence against children

As part of the 2030 Agenda, the world's governments have set ambitious targets to end violence by 2030, in order to deliver the vision of a world where all children grow up free from violence and exploitation.

The Global Partnership to End Violence Against Children will support the efforts of those seeking to prevent violence, protect childhood, and help make societies safe for children.

The Partnership will bring together stakeholders from across the world to end all forms of violence against children.

The Global Partnership aims to:

- Use ambitious targets to set a common strategic direction and to encourage greater urgency and ambition
- Combine universality (all countries) with a focus on the children left furthest behind
- Innovate and learn, especially over the first five years.
- Focus on solutions, not problems – demonstrating that it is possible to prevent and address violence
- Find new ways of working together, while exploring synergies across goals and sectors

Further information at www.end-violence.org



High Time to end violence against children

High Time to end violence against children is an initiative launched by the Special Representative of the UN Secretary General on Violence against Children in March 2016. United Nations Secretary General Ban Ki-moon supported the launch of the initiative and in his message to the participants, he stressed that every child has the right to freedom from all forms of violence.

High Time supports the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and aims to support visible and concrete efforts to achieve target 16.2 on ending all forms of violence against children by 2030. The initiative aims to connect the need for action with the willingness and commitment to make a difference.

The High Time to end violence against children initiative also offers an online portal to valuable information and resources to support and monitor progress in global efforts to stop violence against children.

Further information at www.endviolenceagainstchildren.org

The 10th anniversary of the UN Study on Violence against Children

In 2001, the United Nations General Assembly asked the Secretary General of the United Nations for an official study on violence against children. The Study looked at the problem of violence against children across the world and examined ideas about what could be done about it.

The Study, which is based on the right of children to be protected from violence, was led by the Independent Expert Professor Paulo Sérgio Pinheiro who stated:

“No violence against children is justifiable; all violence against children is preventable.”

The “World Report on Violence against Children” was published in 2006.

Hundreds of children and young people took part in consultations – through meetings, events and campaigns and in other ways. They gave their views on:

- What forms of violence are faced by young people around the world
- How violence affects children and young people
- What are the causes of violence against children and young people
- What needs to be done by governments to prevent all forms of violence against children and young people
- How best to help children and young people who have faced violence
- What children and young people can do to protect themselves from violence.

The UN Study on Violence against Children says:

- Violence against children is never right
- Violence against children can be prevented
- Adults are responsible for protecting children from violence.

Download the full report and findings of the Study

www.unicef.org/violencestudy/reports.html

The UN Secretary General’s Special Representative on Violence against Children

The UN General Assembly took note of the Study’s recommendations and requested the appointment by the Secretary General of a Special Representative on violence against children to act as a high profile, global, independent advocate to promote prevention and elimination of all forms of violence against children (Resolution 62/141). Marta Santos Pais was appointed Special Representative on Violence against Children. Further information is available at <http://srsg.violenceagainstchildren.org>.

The Kyoto Declaration – 10th anniversary and beyond

During May 2006, Religions for Peace and UNICEF convened a global consultation of religious leaders and experts in Toledo, Spain, to provide a religious perspective on the UN Secretary General's Study on Violence against Children and to look at ways of supporting the report's recommendations. Participants from 30 countries representing many world religions were challenged to draw on the unique strengths and skills of religious leaders and communities to find solutions and adopt strategies to protect children from violence.

An important outcome of the consultation was a declaration of "A Multi-Religious Commitment to Confront Violence against Children" which was formally adopted at the Eighth World Assembly of Religions for Peace in Kyoto, Japan, August 2006.

The Kyoto Declaration has served as an invaluable resource for those engaged in multi-religious cooperation and advocacy for children. It explicitly recommends prohibition of corporal punishment and has provided a guide for religious leaders working with others towards prohibition of corporal punishment and other forms violence against children.

The Kyoto Declaration has assumed renewed significance and relevance during the 10th anniversary of the UN Secretary General's Global Report on Violence against Children. UNICEF'S ground breaking report "Hidden in Plain Sight" published in 2014 and the launch of the 2030 Sustainable Development Goals provide additional new opportunities to promote the Kyoto Declaration and re-visit its recommendations.

The following reflections and discussion points are suggested as a guide for those working towards prohibition of corporal punishment of children and they can be used to engage with religious communities, particularly during the process of multi-religious cooperation, to encourage religious communities to develop their work as active advocates for children.



The Kyoto Declaration – A guide for reflection and discussion

A Multi-Religious Commitment to Confront Violence against Children (The Kyoto Declaration)

As representatives of various religious communities gathered at the Religions for Peace VIII World Assembly in Kyoto, Japan, we are committed to confront the reality of violence that affects children in our societies. We offer our support to mobilizing the international community through the United Nations Study on Violence against Children to address these critical issues, and we are ready to work in partnership with governments, UN agencies, and other civil society actors to implement the recommendations of this study.

We find strong consensus across our religious traditions about the inherent dignity of every person, including children. This requires that we reject all forms of violence against children and protect and promote the sanctity of life in every stage of a child's development. Our religions share principles of compassion, justice, love and solidarity that are great strengths in dealing with the difficult presence of violence in human society.

Our faith traditions take a holistic view of a child's life, and thus seek to uphold all the rights of the child in the context of its family, community and the broader social, economic and political environment. All children hold these rights equally and we must ensure that boys and girls have equal opportunities to enjoy these rights, particularly education, protection, health, social development and participation. Our religious communities are blessed to be multi-generational, and we must use this to support the active participation of children in their own development and to address issues of violence.

We must acknowledge that our religious communities have not fully upheld their obligations to protect our children from violence. Through omission, denial and silence, we have at times tolerated, perpetuated and ignored the reality of violence against children in homes, families, institutions and communities, and not actively confronted the suffering that this violence causes. Even as we have not fully lived up to our responsibilities in this regard, we believe that religious communities must be part of the solution to eradicating violence against children, and we commit ourselves to take leadership in our religious communities and the broader society.

None of us can address this problem alone. It requires partnerships, solidarity, and building alliances. Even as our religions have much to offer, we also are open to learning more about the development and well-being of children from other sectors, so that we can each maximize our strengths. We are strongly committed to fostering effective mechanisms for inter-religious cooperation to more effectively combat violence against children.

Based on these principles and guided by the power of the Divine as it is understood in each of our traditions, we make the following recommendations and commitments, speaking to our religious communities, governments, the United Nations, civil society and to all throughout the world who have held a child in love – with tears for its pain, with joy for its life:

1. We will create greater awareness in our communities about the impact of all forms of violence against children, and work actively to change attitudes and practices that perpetuate violence in homes, families, institutions and communities, including corporal punishment, emotional and sexual violence.
2. We will promote the child as a person with rights and dignity, using our religious texts to provide good examples that can help adults to stop using violence in dealing with children.
3. We have an important obligation to teach and train our children, which involves discipline and helping children understand their responsibilities. We will educate and train parents, teachers, religious leaders and others who work with children to find non-violent forms of discipline and education that will ensure their proper upbringing and protect them from violent actions.
4. We will develop curricula to use in theological training and in parental education to raise awareness about child rights and ways to eliminate the use of violence.
5. We are committed to inter-religious cooperation to address violence and will make use of the synergies among our religious communities to promote methodologies, experiences and practices in preventing violence against children.
6. We call upon our governments to adopt legislation to prohibit all forms of violence against children, including corporal punishment, and to ensure the full rights of children, consistent with the Convention on the Rights of the Child and other international and regional agreements. We urge them to establish appropriate mechanisms to ensure the effective implementation of these laws and to ensure that religious communities participate formally in these mechanisms. Our religious communities are ready to serve as monitors of implementation, making use of national and international bodies to maintain accountability.
7. We encourage religious communities and other public actors to use special days, such as the International Day of the Child, to bring public and media attention to child rights issues, particularly violence against children.
8. We call on UNICEF and the World Conference of Religions for Peace (Religions for Peace) to facilitate the sharing of information and developing of resources to assist our communities to more effectively address violence against children.

Kyoto, Japan
28 August 2006

Reflecting on the preamble to the Kyoto Declaration

Read the Preamble to the Kyoto Declaration (the first five paragraphs, page 39).

Since the Kyoto Declaration was endorsed, many religious leaders have taken action and have often been in the forefront of campaigns to end violence against children.

Discussion points

- From the perspective of your faith tradition identify the unique strengths and skills of religious leaders and communities.
- How can these be put into action towards protecting children from violence?
- Highlight particular references to children and non-violence in the scriptures or teachings of your religion.
- How can these teachings be used to counter the arguments of those who misuse their religion to justify corporal punishment of children?



Reflecting on recommendation 1 of the Kyoto Declaration

We will create greater awareness in our communities about the impact of all forms of violence against children and work actively to change attitudes and practices that perpetuate violence in homes, families, institutions and communities, including corporal punishment, emotional and sexual violence.

Discussion points

Religious leaders have unique insights into attitudes and cultural practices in their communities and are well-placed to challenge all forms of violence against children.

The shared principles of compassion, kindness, justice, love, equality and non-violence are incompatible with violence against children.

- Discuss ways in which the universal principles can be used to promote change in cultures and traditions in which corporal punishment is embedded and normalised.
- What is known about the nature and scale of corporal punishment in the religious community and the community at large?
- How do local laws, customs and traditions affect the protection of both girls and boys from corporal punishment?
- Discuss the best ways of creating awareness of the impact of different forms of violence against children including corporal punishment. See resources on pages 60-61.



Conclude with a reflection or prayer from pages 24-34

Reflecting on recommendation 2 of the Kyoto Declaration

We will promote the child as a person with rights and dignity, using our religious texts to provide good examples that can help adults to stop using violence in dealing with children.

The 1948 Universal Declaration of Human Rights states that “All human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights”. Human dignity is something inherent that cannot be taken away – it means that every person has value and is worthy of respect; in religious terms it means that all life is sacred. A number of religious communities believe children are born in the image and likeness of God and that we need to recognise that goodness or divine spark in each other.

The UN Convention on the Rights of the Child confirms that children, too, are holders of human rights, and that these rights apply to all children, without discrimination. A child’s right to respect for human dignity is expressed in part through the right to be protected – through legislative and other measures – from all forms of violence, including from all corporal punishment and other cruel, inhuman and degrading treatment.

Discussion points

- How is respect for children’s human dignity demonstrated in the religious community?
- What do our religious and spiritual traditions teach about children’s right to human dignity?
- Highlight particular references to children and non-violence in the scriptures or teachings of your religion.
- How can these teachings be used to counter the arguments of those who misuse their religion to justify violence against children?
- What are the similarities between the Convention on the Rights of the Child and core religious teachings and value systems?
- How can religious leaders create awareness and understanding of the CRC for children, adults, in schools and in the wider community?

Conclude with a reflection or prayer from pages 24-34



Reflecting on recommendation 3 of the Kyoto Declaration

We have an important obligation to teach and train our children, which involves discipline and helping children understand their responsibilities. We will educate and train parents, teachers, religious leaders and others who work with children to find non-violent forms of discipline and education that will ensure their proper upbringing and protect them from violent actions.

The term “discipline” is often misunderstood to mean “punishment” but it means to teach or guide children with adults serving as positive role models. Punishment means to “cause to undergo pain”.

There is no place for punishment in positive non-violent discipline – which is based on an understanding of the needs and rights of the developing child. It is always respectful and gives encouragement.

Positive non-violent discipline respects the human dignity and physical, emotional and spiritual integrity of the child. It:

- gives guidance to a child without the use of violence;
- builds loving, trusting empathic relationships;
- fosters an understanding of the physical and emotional needs of the developing child;
- promotes and encourages a child’s participation and self-evaluation;
- respects the child’s point of view;
- listens to the child and encourages the child to problem-solve; and
- teaches and models skills for resolving conflict without the use of violence.

Discussion points

- How is “discipline” understood in the religious community?



- Children who are discriminated against because of disability and gender can be particularly vulnerable. What are the community attitudes towards these children?
- Discuss ways in which positive non-violent discipline can be promoted in the community.

Conclude with a reflection or prayer from pages 24-34

Reflecting on recommendation 4 of the Kyoto Declaration

We will develop curricula to use in theological training and in parental education to raise awareness about child rights and ways to eliminate the use of violence.

Sacred texts and scriptures which demonstrate respect for children and non-violence can be effective in changing attitudes. Theologians, teachers and scholars have authority to study religious practices and texts and interpret them in the light of the core values and tenets of the religious tradition. They are in a position to explain misunderstandings and misinterpretations of scripture which condone violence and perpetuate violations of children's rights through harmful practices.

Discussion points

- Discuss ways of encouraging theologians, teachers and scholars to study their religious texts and teachings and develop resources which promote non-violent discipline.
- What resources and training materials are needed to encourage theological reflection and clarification of scriptural interpretation to end religious justification for violence against children?



Conclude with a reflection or prayer from pages 24-34

Reflecting on recommendation 5 of the Kyoto Declaration

We are committed to inter-religious cooperation to address violence and will make use of the synergies among our religious communities to promote methodologies, experiences and practices in preventing violence against children.

Inter-religious cooperation enables people to work towards a common goal and share skills and expertise. When people from different religions come together and speak with one voice they can be a powerful influence in changing attitudes and achieving reform. They can be an effective, visible example of cooperation between diverse religious traditions for the protection of children.

Inter-religious forums are representative of diverse religious communities and may function at local, national, regional and international level. They often have close ties with local and national governments and may be consulted by outside bodies for their views on policy.

It is important to engage with women of faith who are often under-represented in multi-religious forums and to involve them in the decision-making process. It may be necessary to hold special meetings with women so that their voices are heard in the movement to end violence against children.

Ensure indigenous peoples and those from minority groups are included alongside the major religious traditions.

Discussion points

- Discuss ways of building inter-religious cooperation to take action to end violence against children.
- What action can be taken by the inter-religious body to raise the status of children in the community?
- Discuss ways of developing awareness of the harm caused by violent punishment of children.
- Discuss a plan of action towards ending violence against children.



Conclude with a reflection or prayer from pages 24-34

Reflecting on recommendation 6 of the Kyoto Declaration

We call upon our governments to adopt legislation to prohibit all forms of violence against children, including corporal punishment, and to ensure the full rights of children, consistent with the Convention on the Rights of the Child and other international and regional agreements. We urge them to establish appropriate mechanisms to ensure the effective implementation of these laws and to ensure that religious communities participate formally in these mechanisms. Our religious communities are ready to serve as monitors of implementation, making use of national and international bodies to maintain accountability.

Prohibition of corporal punishment by law is an essential strategy for ending all forms of violence against children. It recognises a child's right to respect for their human dignity and physical integrity. It makes it clear to all people responsible for the care of children that hitting a child is no more lawful than hitting anyone else.

An active campaign for law reform challenges the way in which children are regarded and promotes children as people in their own right. It is important to identify respected religious leaders who support law reform. They can be influential role models and can help in accessing support from other religious leaders.

Although governments have a primary obligation to protect children, all adults have a responsibility to end violence against children. Religious leaders and their communities have a vital role to play and above all they can be role models and lead by example and they can set a standard for others to follow.

No country can say it has prohibited corporal punishment in all settings until it has passed legislation which does this. In order to make a difference in children's lives legislation should be accompanied by implementation strategies and public education to raise the awareness of children and adults of children's rights, to information about the dangers of corporal punishment and to provide adults with information on positive non-violent forms of discipline.

Discussion points

- Discuss ways in which religious leaders and communities can support law reform
- Discuss the opportunities for religious leaders to be role models and lead by example – how does this relate to ending violence against children?
- What can religious leaders and communities do to help implement the law?

Conclude with a reflection or prayer from pages 24-34



Reflecting on recommendation 7 of the Kyoto Declaration

We encourage religious communities and other public actors to use special days, such as the International Day of the Child, to bring public and media attention to child rights issues, particularly violence against children.

There are many opportunities for using special days to draw attention to children's issues. These include Universal Children's Day; The World Day of Prayer and Action for Children, International Children's Day, Religious Festivals and 16 Days of Activism to end violence against women and girls.

Discussion points

- Many religious communities are involved in campaigns to end violence against women which is closely connected with violence against children. How can special events to end violence against women draw attention to the connections with violence against children?
- How could your religious community use religious festivals to promote childhoods free from violence?



Conclude with a reflection or prayer from pages 24-34

Reflecting on recommendation 8 of the Kyoto Declaration

We call on UNICEF and the World Conference of Religions for Peace (Religions for Peace) to facilitate the sharing of information and developing of resources to assist our communities to more effectively address violence against children.

Following the World Assembly of Religions for Peace in Kyoto, Japan in 2006, UNICEF and Religions for Peace produced a resource "From Commitment to Action – What Religions Communities Can Do to Eliminate Violence against Children". The resource calls for collaboration with religious, multi-religious and inter-religious organisations and for the sharing of resources and training materials and guides for dissemination within religious communities.

It also calls for meaningful participation of children towards protecting children from violence. It recognises that through their participation, girls and boys can highlight the violence they experience and with the support of adults, take action to address it. Religious communities are in touch with people throughout the life span and are in a unique position to promote children's participation by listening to their views on violence and creating opportunities for them to express their thoughts, ideas and solutions.

Discussion points

- What resources are needed to assist religious communities to end violence against children?
- Identify ways of collaborating with others to develop, share and disseminate resources.
- What barriers to participation do children face in your religious community? How can these be overcome?
- How can local religious communities share training and resources to facilitate children's meaningful, safe participation?
- What information and support do children need to participate safely and meaningfully?
- What are some of the ways in which children can be involved in strategies to end violence against children?

Conclude with a reflection or prayer from pages 24-34

Children are the only true experts on what it is like to be a child. I call on you to consult with us before you make decisions that affect us. Remember that the times are changing. We live in a different world than you did. For that reason, you shall never assume that the challenges today are the same that you faced when you were a child. We have the competence you need. Our participation will benefit society, not only today, but also in our common future.

Camilla, from Norway, in a speech at the follow-up to the UN Special Session on Children at the General Assembly in New York in December 2007 (from CRIN website).



Examples of religious action to end corporal punishment

Church of Scotland General Assembly votes to prohibit corporal punishment of children

24 May 2016

Commissioners at the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland voted in favour of calling on Scottish ministers and parliamentarians to acknowledge the recommendations of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child and remove the defence of “justifiable assault” from the Criminal Justice (Scotland) Act 2003.

We now add the Church’s voice to many other organisations to call upon the Scottish Government to remove the defence of justifiable assault, granting children the same rights that every adult enjoys in this area.

Bringing up children is one of the most challenging privileges any of us can face.

But in performing this privilege we must not negate the rights of the child.

As parents, as a Church, as a society we want the best for our children.

As a Church we will work with parents and others to support them in doing that.

The General Assembly instructed the Church and Society Council to join relevant campaigns including Children are Unbeatable! Scotland which seeks to end the corporal punishment of children.

Commissioners also urged officials to work with the Church’s social care arm CrossReach and Safeguarding service to provide access to resources to support the development of non-violent parenting skills.

Further information is available on the Church of Scotland website:

www.churchofscotland.org.uk/news_and_events/news/recent/general_assembly_calls_for_law_change_to_protect_children

Religious leaders in Southern Africa promote prohibition

The Southern African Bishops' Conference made a submission to the Parliamentary Portfolio Committee on Social Development supporting the proposed prohibition of corporal punishment in the Children's Amendment Bill 2007. A further Parliamentary Submission was made in 2013.

"The Southern African Bishops' Conference welcomes Clause 139(1) which states that 'A person who has care of a child including a person who has parental responsibilities and rights in respect of the child, must respect, promote and protect the child's right to physical and psychological integrity as conferred by Section 12 (1)(c) and (e) of the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa.' This clause flows from the Constitution and seeks to ensure that the rights of all citizens under the Constitution are indeed extended to children – our most vulnerable citizens. We further note the assertion in Clause 139 (2) that 'No child may be subjected to corporal punishment or be punished in a cruel, inhuman or degrading way.'"

"There is nothing in the Catechism of the Catholic Church which supports the right of parents to use corporal punishment."

<http://cplo.org.za/wp-content/uploads/downloads/2013/06/Corporal-Discipline-in-the-Home-June-2013.pdf>

In South Africa some local religious leaders opposed the call by the South African Human Rights Commission (SAHRC) for a ban on parents spanking their children. But South African Hindu Maha Sabha president, Ashwin Trikamjee, supported the call to ban spanking. "I think the psychological consequences of corporal punishment far outweigh any other advantage people may argue they derive from it and there are so many alternatives to impose discipline," he said. "Corporal punishment in the home is another form of abuse. Our scriptures in no way promote corporal punishment or any form of violence," Trikamjee said.

Reported in IOL Daily News, February 2016

www.iol.co.za/dailynews/news/some-religious-leaders-slam-call-to-ban-spanking-1979764

National conference in Qom, Iran



Around 100 religious leaders from various faiths and religions, along with experts, intellectuals, and policy-makers, met in Qom, Iran, in October 2011 to discuss the country's achievements and constraints in combating violence against children, focusing particularly on corporal punishment in family and educational settings. The event was supported by UNICEF Iran in close collaboration with the Iranian Judiciary and the Centre for Human Rights Studies of Mofid University, situated in the holy city of Qom.

The conference was the first of its kind in Iran and highlighted the important role religious leaders can play in overcoming violence against children in family and educational settings.

A key outcome of the event was a Declaration in which the participating religious leaders made a commitment to advocacy for ending violence against children and promoting non-violent discipline. The Declaration includes key recommendations for actions by religious leaders and other stakeholders to confront violence against children and to protect children in their communities. The full Declaration is available at www.unicef.org/iran/Declaration_Inter-religious_Conf_on_VAC2011_UNICEF_Iran_-_FINAL.PDF; UNICEF's media release is at www.unicef.org/iran/media_6711.html).

Pacific Countries Conference on Violence against Children

In May 2015 UNICEF held a Pacific Islands Countries conference in Nadi, Fiji, which called for violence against children to be brought out of the shadows. Reporting on the conference in the *Fiji Times*, President Ratu Epeli Nailatikau referred to the Old Testament Book of Proverbs, 13:24 – “Whoever spares the rod hates their children, but the one who loves their children is careful to discipline them” – which is often used to justify corporal punishment, and called for a transformation in the Christian perspective on violence against children. He contrasted the quote from Proverbs with the New Testament passage Mark 10:13-16, explaining that here Jesus affirms that the Kingdom is child-centred and “offers the possibility for a paradigm shift in the understanding of loving our children”.

The President stated: “The children of the Pacific cannot wait to be free of violence, wherever they are. We may have limited resources and competing concerns – but if we are to protect our beautiful children, then this must be a priority.”

Making a commitment

Ending corporal punishment of children - A model statement

The following statement can be freely adapted by multi-religious groups, inter-faith forums, religious communities and individuals as a pledge of solidarity and resolve on the issue. It can be used as an expression of support for campaigns to prohibit corporal punishment or as a letter from local religious groups and individuals to lobby members of parliament or to gain broader support and form new partnerships.

Guided by principles of compassion and justice our different traditions are united in our respect for the inherent dignity of every child and we are united in our resolve to end corporal punishment of children. We are committed to putting our faith into action and to working in solidarity with people from other sectors, communities, inter-faith networks, NGOs and governments, towards prohibition of all corporal punishment of children in homes, schools, the community and all other settings.

Our scriptures and religious texts and teachings call us to care for people especially the most vulnerable. Corporal punishment violates a child's physical, emotional and spiritual integrity and it is incompatible with the universal values of compassion, peace, justice and non-violence which each of our traditions profess. Discipline is about teaching and guiding children by adult example - not through hitting children and causing pain.

Ending the commonplace practice of corporal punishment will reflect the seriousness with which we regard the right of every child to grow up free from the fear of being hit and humiliated – and it says so much about the sort of world we want for all children. This is not only a moral and religious imperative - it is about giving children the respect to which they are entitled. It is important that law reform is accompanied by extensive public education the promotion of non-violent, positive parenting and access to resources and support for parents.

If we want peace in our world we must end the legality of corporal punishment, promote non-violent relationships between adults and children, and treat our children with gentleness and love.



What religious communities can do towards ending corporal punishment of children

- Model and promote positive non-violent parenting.
- Promote the meaning of “discipline” as teaching and guidance- not physical punishment; offer support and resources for parents.
- Speak out about the harmful effects of corporal punishment.
- Explain why the legality and practice of corporal punishment is incompatible with universal religious values of compassion, equality, justice, equity and non-violence.
- Place children at the heart of the community. Enable the meaningful participation of children and make provision for their voices and opinions to be heard.
- Ensure religious texts, scriptures, teachings and traditional ceremonies and practices are used to promote respect for children - not to condone or perpetrate violence against children.
- Hold vigils and events dedicated to ending legalised violence against children.
- Use opportunities in the life of the religious community such as marriage preparation and the birth of a baby, to promote prohibition of corporal punishment.
- Link the issue of corporal punishment and the urgent need to prohibit it with campaigns to end violence against women and girls.
- Identify child protection risks in the religious community. Ensure accountability and reporting mechanisms are in place.
- Ensure child protection and safeguarding policies explicitly denounce corporal punishment.
- Encourage the religious community to actively support law reform at www.endcorporalpunishment.org
- Work with others, including governments, NGOs and inter-faith councils towards prohibition and elimination of all corporal punishment of children.

“What religious communities can do towards ending corporal punishment of children” is available as a set of posters to download at www.churchesfornon-violence.org.

A Charter for religious communities

This is a revised version of the Charter which was developed and signed by religious communities in Coventry, UK, in 2006 as a multi-religious resource to mark the publication of the UN Global Report on Violence against Children. It can be used for local communities or serve as a template for a local charter.

1. **All children are entitled to equal respect for their inherent human dignity**

Working actively towards a culture of respect for all children is key towards ending violence against children. We will, in cooperation with others, foster respect for the inherent human dignity of all children.

2. **All children are entitled to grow up in family and all other settings free from corporal punishment and all other forms of violence and humiliating treatment**

Children are entitled to more not less protection from violence than adults, including protection from physical, spiritual, emotional, verbal, sexual, psychological and gender-based violence. We will use every opportunity to work with others to create awareness about the negative effects of violence against children. Preventing violence against children and urging governments to pass legislation to end legalised violence against children, including corporal punishment, will be a priority in our religious community and wider society.

3. **All children have the right to speak out and be listened to**

The knowledge, ideas, gifts, competence, life experiences and perspectives of children should be respected, encouraged and listened to in both family and community life. We will demonstrate full respect and regard for the views of children by listening to children and facilitating children's participation and involvement in issues of concern to them.

4. **All adults have the responsibility to enable children to feel safe enough to speak out when they feel hurt or threatened**

All adults who are in contact with children should have an understanding of the needs of children and knowledge of how children. Adults should be aware of the best ways of creating an environment where children feel safe to express themselves. Adults should also develop skills for communicating with children at different life stages. We will facilitate training to promote these actions.

5. **All children are entitled to positive, non-violent relationships with the adults who care for them**

In our work and contact with children we will strive to build relationships between adults and children which are positive and life-enhancing. Adults can teach children by their own example and demonstrate ways of resolving conflict without the use of hitting or any other form of violence, however supposedly 'reasonable'. Adults are the protectors, guides and supporters of children and as such responsible for their quality of life.
6. **The protection of children from violence is the responsibility of the whole community**

Children should be active equal participants with adults in solving problems of violence in community whether it is adult to child, child to child or adult to adult violence. We will encourage children to use their capacity to make a positive contribution in keeping with their age and development.
7. **All children are entitled to learn about the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child in a way that is appropriate to their age and development**

We will use every opportunity to support initiatives to enable children to become fully conversant with the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child and to raise adults' awareness and understanding of the Convention. Peer education can be an empowering way for children to learn about their human rights.
8. **All children are entitled to the highest standard of care and protection from those who work with them**

All adults working with children in our religious communities will receive high standards of training, support, resources and clear lines of accountability for working with children. Adults are responsible for creating networks for the prevention of violence against children.
9. **Children who have endured any form of violence are entitled to emotional, physical, spiritual and psychological support from people qualified to help them**

Our religious communities will, whenever possible, work with qualified people to bring support, compassion, spiritual help and healing to children who have endured forms of violence.
10. **All children are entitled to learn non-violent ways to resolve conflict**

We commit ourselves to providing positive guidance in resolving conflict that leads to compassion, justice and fairness and respect for the human rights of others.

Appendices



1 A short guide to planning a multi-religious gathering

This short guide is not exhaustive but it provides some ideas for planning multi-religious events. It can be amended according to tradition and local need.

An inclusive approach to multi-religious gatherings dedicated to ending corporal punishment of children is to involve representatives from different religious and spiritual traditions and philosophies at the beginning of the planning process so that theological and cultural differences can be accommodated. For example, dance and song are an integral part of some liturgical traditions but are prohibited in others. Children and young people who are involved should also be consulted and invited to participate in a meaningful way.

Language

The use of inclusive language is essential and this should include opportunities for the whole assembly or gathering to participate. A short, simple order of proceedings is most effective for multi-religious gatherings. Representatives from each religious group can be invited to contribute a relevant reading, prayer, mantra or blessing from their own tradition and language.

The word “prayer” has different interpretations in diverse traditions. To those who believe in a deity or deities, prayer may imply a relationship with the deity through supplication, contemplation, praise and worship. For groups who do not subscribe to a deity “prayer” may imply a journey towards personal spiritual growth, consciousness-raising and/or spiritual transformation.

There are many terms used for “god” including Divine Being, Ultimate Truth, Creator God, Allah, Krishna, Banaitja, Great Spirit, Ahura Mazda etc. Some spiritual traditions believe in one god or gods but non-theistic traditions do not worship a god but believe in a personal spiritual journey.

Action points

- Take steps to ensure the service is inclusive of the different traditions taking part.
- Invite a respected community figure to preside over or lead the service or gathering.
- Hold the event in a neutral outdoor environment or indoor venue.

- Some traditions do not shake hands so a simple greeting of peace can help people feel welcome.
- Ensure the different elements of the order of service focus on the theme of ending corporal punishment of children – this will give a sense of unity of purpose.
- Use universal spiritual practices during the gathering such as silence, story-telling, candle lighting. These can symbolise unity and deepen the inter-religious experience.
- Liturgical dance, singing, chants and music using traditional instruments such as the Jewish Shofar, bells and Buddhist singing bowls can be used if appropriate for the gathering.
- Invite a representative from each spiritual tradition to carry a banner symbolising their community with a quote or message supporting prohibition of corporal punishment.
- Ensure the time and date of the event is acceptable to all traditions and doesn't clash with religious festivals.

Resources

- Interfaith Calendar 2016 – 2021 contains primary sacred times for the world's religions and is available at www.interfaithcalendar.org
- Prayers on pages 24-34 may be used.
- A chart "What the world's religions say about children" can be downloaded at http://churchesfornon-violence.org/wp/?page_id=84

Monitoring and evaluating progress

It is important to monitor and evaluate work in religious communities towards ending corporal punishment of children. It helps to measure effectiveness and progress and it informs ongoing or future activities including those of other organisations and faith-based communities.

Monitoring and evaluation involves keeping track of an initiative and measuring its effectiveness against the programme's aims and objectives. It involves collecting information on a programme or project, recording its progress and using the data as a basis for evaluation. Evaluation data and feedback is essential to future planning, with successful elements incorporated into new programmes.

2 The Golden Rule

Bahá'í Faith

Lay not on any soul a load that you would not wish to be laid upon you, and desire not for anyone the things you would not desire for yourself.

Bahá'u'lláh, Gleanings

Buddhism

Treat not others in ways that you yourself would find hurtful.

The Buddha, Udana-Varga 5.18

Christianity

In everything, do to others as you would have them do to you; for this is the law and the prophets.

Matthew 7:12

Confucianism

Do not do to others what you would not like yourself. Then there will be no resentment against you, either in the family or in the state.

Analects 12:2

Hinduism

This is the sum of duty: do not do to others what would cause pain if done to you.

Mahabharata 5:1517

Islam

Not one of you truly believes until you wish for others what you wish for yourself.

The Prophet Muhammad, Hadith

Jainism

One should treat all creatures in the world as one would like to be treated.

Mahavira, Sutrakritanga 1.11.33

Judaism

What is hateful to you, do not do to your neighbour. This is the whole Torah; all the rest is commentary. Go and learn it.

Hillel, Talmud, Shabbath 31a

Native Spirituality

We are as much alive as we keep the earth alive.

Chief Dan George

Sikhism

I am a stranger to no one; and no one is a stranger to me.

Indeed, I am a friend to all.

Guru Granth Sahib, p.1299

Taoism

Regard your neighbour's gain as your own gain and your neighbour's loss as your own loss.

Lao Tzu, T'ai Shang Kan Ying P'ien, 213-218

Unitarianism

We affirm and promote respect for the interdependent web of all existence of which we are a part.

Unitarian principle

Zoroastrianism

Do not do unto others whatever is injurious to yourself.

Shayast-na-Shayast 13.29

3 Online Resources

The United Nations Secretary General's Study on Violence against Children

www.unicef.org/violencestudy

This site has links to a number of resources including the World Report on Violence against Children, a photo essay Stopping the Violence, and a video Youth against violence, with contributions from young people in India, Philippines, Romania, Venezuela and Zambia. A child friendly report and video Youth against violence can be downloaded at www.unicef.org/violencestudy/responding.html

Understanding the Convention on the Rights of the Child

www.unicef.org/crc

The site includes the videos Teaching the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) and Speak for Yourself, Children, the UN and the CRC

Website of the Special Representative of the UN Secretary General on Violence against Children

<http://srsg.violenceagainstchildren.org>

This site has links to many publications and resources on violence against children. A special section for children and young people contains child friendly materials including A Road Map to End Violence against Children and children's declarations. Further resources are available at <http://srsg.violenceagainstchildren.org/children-corner>

Transforming our World: The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development

<https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/post2015/transformingourworld>

Positive Discipline in Everyday Parenting

Written by Joan Durrant, published by Save the Children, third edition 2013, this manual with associated materials is available at www.positivedisciplineeveryday.com

Parenting for a Peaceful World

This is the title of a book by Robin Grille. An associated video narrated by Ajas Swafford aged 10, traces the history of violent treatment of children from early times and discusses the negative effects of violence on generations of children. It can be viewed at www.naturalchild.org/videos/parenting_peaceful_world.html

Parenting for Lifelong Health (PLH)

www.who.int/violence_injury_prevention/violence/child/plh/en/

The site provides Information on the development and testing of a suite of affordable parenting programmes to prevent violence in low-resource settings. Parenting for Lifelong Health (PLH) is being developed through collaboration between WHO, Stellenbosch University in South Africa, the University of Cape Town in South Africa, Bangor University in Wales, the universities of Oxford and Reading in England, and UNICEF. Related links include a video introducing PLH.

Hidden in Plain Sight: a statistical analysis of violence against children (2014) and companion publication Ending Violence against Children: Six strategies, UNICEF, www.unicef.org/publications/index_74865.html

Save the Children Resource Centre contains resources including posters, cards and videos towards ending physical and other humiliating punishment against children, <http://resourcecentre.savethechildren.se/our-thematic-areas/physical-and-humiliating-punishment>

UNICEF - Child Rights Education Toolkit

The toolkit uses the metaphor of a tree to explore child rights education in the context of school-based initiatives that promote learning about rights, learning through rights (using rights as an organizing principle to transform the culture of learning) and learning for rights (taking action to realize rights), in an overall context of learning as a right. It contains a range of practical tools, checklists, mapping exercises, project examples and evidence of the benefits of high quality child rights education.

Although the approaches in the toolkit are relevant for all countries, the first edition focuses on the work of National Committees in high-income countries. A second edition in the future will also cover the related work of UNICEF country offices.

www.unicef.org/crc/index_30184.html#toolkit

