

**ACA SpankOut Day**  
**Stop Corporal Punishment on Children**  
**(29 / 4 / 2018)**

**Press Release**

In support of the International SpankOut Day on 30 April, the Against Child Abuse Chuk Yuen Centre organized a SpankOut Day carnival to promote the “zero” tolerance of violence against children and positive parenting in order to develop a safe, harmonious and caring community.

**4.30 SpankOut Day**

USA initiated SpankOut Day in 1998 to give widespread attention to the need of ending corporal punishment on children and to promote non-violent ways of parenting. SpankOut Day was thus established on 30 April of every year by many countries around the world.

The Against Child Abuse had organized activities to promote SpankOut Day since 2005. Today (29 April 2018) the ACA Chuk Yuen Centre organized a SpankOut Day carnival in Wong Tai Sin to promote positive parenting to replace corporal punishment. Through positive parenting, we hope parents can stop violence on children so that they can grow up in a safe and non-violent environment. Our carnival also included a variety of activities, such as children's performances, game booths, lucky draw, guest sharing, exhibitions and introduction of our services.

**Negative impact of corporal punishment**

Corporal punishment cannot help children to understand their mistakes. On the other hand, it has a negative impact to their development. There are many negative consequences of corporal punishment, including negative emotion, weak attention, poor self-discipline, low self-esteem, destruction to parent-child relationship, physical and mental health damage and even death. Children will also misunderstand that violence is the only mean to solve problems and become abusers when they grow up. Corporal punishment is a form of violence and it is an infringement of children's rights. Everyone, including child, enjoys human rights, and violence is a violation of personal dignity. More importantly, prolonged use of corporal punishment, regardless of how trivial the act



is, may later escalate to physical child abuse.

### **Legislation to ban corporal punishment on children**

In 1976, the government enacted “Child Care Service Regulations” stating that no person shall administer corporal punishment to a child in child care centre. Flogging on young offenders as a form of corporal punishment was banned in Hong Kong penal system in 1990. In September 1991, the government amended “Education Regulations” to ban corporal punishment on students. Unfortunately, until now, there is no legal prohibition of corporal punishment on children at home.

According to the statistics of child abuse cases from the Social Welfare Department, the number of child abuse cases (including physical abuse, neglect, sexual abuse, psychological abuse and multiple abuse) was 9179 in total from 2008 to 2017. Over half of the child abuse cases were physical abuse. The serious situation is of our concern. The immediate prohibition of all corporal punishment on children is necessary and the government should enhance parents’ capacity of positive parenting.

### **We need child development policies**

Most of the parents love their children but they mainly resorted to beating, scolding and controlling their children in discipline. We encourage the parents to adopt positive parenting to discipline children. Corporal punishment is a form of violence and it is an infringement of children’s rights. Corporal punishment on children not only causes them physical pain, it also affects their psychological health. Violence can be transmitted from generation to generation.

We have the following recommendations:

1. To prohibit all corporal punishment on children including at home by law. The bottom line of zero tolerance for violence should be set by legislation. We are determined to take necessary measures to protect children and families. Until now, 53 countries or states have passed by laws to ban all forms of corporal punishment (please refer to the attachment). We hope that Hong Kong can become one of them to ban corporal punishment on children by law. Children have the right to grow up without fear and violence. Prohibition of all corporal punishment does not equal to



let all the abusive parents get into jail. Compulsory parent education and counseling services for parents can be one of the approaches.

2. To provide assistance for parents to acquire legal and positive parenting skills and support them in difficult circumstances. Education on non-violent conflict resolution must start early.
3. To implement a mandatory (professional) reporting mechanism for child abuse, so that professionals should not hesitate to refer, report and handle suspected child abuse cases. Once neighbors or schools find that children are suspected of being abused, the Social Welfare Department and other relevant law enforcement departments should follow up immediately to prevent further injury to children.

We appeal to stop all forms of corporal punishment on children and cultivate a safe environment for children. We wish that every day is a SpankOut Day!

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### Attachment

In the following 53 countries or states, children are protected by law from all corporal punishment:

No.	Country	No.	Country
1	Albania	28	Luxembourg
2	Andorra	29	Malta
3	Argentina	30	Mongolia
4	Austria	31	Montenegro
5	Benin	32	Netherlands
6	Bolivia	33	New Zealand
7	Brazil	34	Nicaragua
8	Bulgaria	35	Norway
9	Cabo Verde	36	Paraguay
10	Congo, Republic of	37	Peru
11	Costa Rica	38	Poland
12	Croatia	39	Portugal
13	Cyprus	40	Republic of Moldova
14	Denmark	41	Romania
15	Estonia	42	San Marino
16	Finland	43	Slovenia
17	Germany	44	South Sudan
18	Greece	45	Spain
19	Honduras	46	Sweden
20	Hungary	47	TFYR Macedonia
21	Iceland	48	Togo
22	Ireland	49	Tunisia
23	Israel	50	Turkmenistan
24	Kenya	51	Ukraine
25	Latvia	52	Uruguay
26	Liechtenstein	53	Venezuela
27	Lithuania		

Source:

**“Global progress towards prohibiting all corporal punishment”, Global Initiative to End All Corporal Punishment of Children, April 2018.**

<http://www.endcorporalpunishment.org/assets/pdfs/legality-tables/Global-progress-table-commitment.pdf>

