

# Advocating an End to Corporal Punishment of Children: A Model Policy Statement for Organizations

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**POLICY STATEMENT: "IT'S NEVER OK TO HIT A CHILD" -- There are no justifications or excuses for hitting children.**

## Goal of Policy Statement: (Why Adopt a Statement?)

### **BE ENLIGHTENED WITNESS: (Alice Miller)**

We recognize:

- ◆ Individual and Collective Responsibility for prevention of harm to children BEFORE IT OCCURS
- ◆ The harm CP causes children
- ◆ The world as seen through children's eyes:
- ◆ The need to listen to and support parents, relatives and all who raise children without CP
- ◆ Child caring practices that nurture, teach and guide children
- ◆ The social, normative and legal support for corporal punishment makes the use of positive alternatives less likely and reduces the impact of positive interaction strategies.
- ◆ As targets of corporal punishment children are forced to cope with pain and confusion, while in positive and supportive relationships (without violence) children develop positive non-violent values and behaviors.
- ◆ We support the use of child caring practices that nurture, teach and guide children, recognizing their uniqueness and developmental needs at various stages in their personal and social developmental process

### **Other Enlightened Witnesses: (Sample Policy Statements)**

National Association of Pediatric Nurse Practitioners (NAPNAP),  
[http://www.jpnedhc.org/article/S0891-5245\(11\)00228-8/pdf](http://www.jpnedhc.org/article/S0891-5245(11)00228-8/pdf)  
American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry: Child Maltreatment and Violence Committee  
[https://www.aacap.org/aacap/Policy\\_Statements/2012/Policy\\_Statement\\_on\\_Corporal\\_Punishment.aspx](https://www.aacap.org/aacap/Policy_Statements/2012/Policy_Statement_on_Corporal_Punishment.aspx)  
Canadian Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry  
<http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC2538456/>

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## Ending CP: Human Rights Support

**The UN Convention on the Rights of the Child** and other international and regional human rights treaties require states to prohibit corporal punishment of children in all settings of their lives.

**There is growing progress towards universal prohibition** of this most common form of violence against children: As of July 2015 **46 countries** have prohibited all corporal punishment of children, including in the family home. At least **47** more countries have expressed a commitment to full prohibition.

Para.18. Article 37 of the **CRC requires nations to ensure that "no child shall be subjected to torture or other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment"**. This is complemented and extended by article 19, which requires nations to **"take all appropriate legislative, administrative, social and educational measures to protect the child from all forms of physical or mental violence, injury or abuse, neglect or negligent treatment, maltreatment or exploitation, including sexual abuse, while in the care of parent(s), legal guardian(s) or any other person who has the care of the child"**.

**There is no ambiguity: "all forms of physical or mental violence" does not leave room for any level of legalized violence against children.** Corporal punishment and other cruel or degrading forms of punishment are forms of violence and States must take all appropriate legislative, administrative, social and educational measures to eliminate them.

American Psychoanalytic Association:

<http://www.apsa.org/sites/default/files/2013%20-%20Position%20Statement%20on%20Physical%20Punishment.pdf>

The United Methodist Church:

<http://www.umc.org/what-we-believe/discipline-children-without-corporal-punishment>

## Ending CP: Research Support: CP as a 'Gateway'

**NOTE: No one asks if hitting women or minorities is a good thing, of if we can prove it's harmful. Such a test is only reserved for the hitting of children.**

IMPACTS ON CHILDREN:

Escalation: Hitting >Abuse > Death

Associated Outcomes in Childhood:

- ◆ Increased aggression in children
- ◆ Poor moral internalization
- ◆ Increased antisocial behaviour
- ◆ Impaired cognitive development
- ◆ Mental harm and indirect physical harm
- ◆ Physical Health

Outcomes For Adults Children Become:

- ◆ Aggressive, antisocial and criminal behavior in adulthood.
- ◆ Violence towards a partner or child as an adult
- ◆ Girls' Experience of partner violence as adult women
- ◆ Boys' subsequent inequitable gender attitudes as adult men.
- ◆ mental health problems in adulthood including: low self-esteem, depression, alcoholism, self-harm and suicidal tendencies, major depression, mania, anxiety disorders, alcohol and drug abuse and personality disorders.