

## **Ban corporal punishment for children**

There have been some discussions over the past few weeks (including in these columns) on corporal punishment of children.

Globally a total of 49 states have now prohibited all corporal punishment. Corporal punishment not only hurts the child physically, but also sends a message that the child is worthless.

Smacking or hitting an adult is violence. Why should that not be so when inflicted on a child?

The child's rights and dignity as a person must be respected. Corporal punishment of children is a form of violence. It should be totally banned as it violates the child's right to be respected for his or her human dignity and physical integrity.

Research has demonstrated consistently that corporal punishment does not work for children and parents. It does not stop the bad behaviour of "difficult" children.

It suggests a variety of poor outcomes such as increased antisocial behaviour and juvenile delinquency, greater approval of other forms of violence, greater impulsiveness and less self-control, poorer parent-child relationships, poorer mental ability, more drug abuse, and greater alcohol abuse.

Children learn through parental modelling. How parents act will have a profound impact on the development of their children. Parents need to care for themselves and learn to deal with their own stress and have self-control.

If you do not want your child to hit others or have poor outcomes, do not hit them, but teach them to respect others. Even if you dislike a child's behaviour, never suggest that you dislike the child.

*Jessica Ho, director, Against Child Abuse*

Reference:

<http://www.scmp.com/comment/letters/article/2027794/letters-editor-october-13-2016>