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ACA SpankOut Day
Stop Corporal Punishment on Children
(30 / 4 / 2017)

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 1988 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 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, and low self-esteem. Children will also misunderstand that violence is the only means to solve problems. 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



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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 9176 in total from 2007 to 2016. Nearly 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.

We need child development policies

Dr. Jessica Ho, Director of ACA, said that 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, 52 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.
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.



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3. To establish an independent child commission to cultivate a safe environment for the optimal growth of 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 52 countries or states, children are protected by law from all corporal punishment:

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

Source:

“Global progress towards prohibiting all corporal punishment”, Global Initiative to End All Corporal Punishment of Children, March 2017.

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

