



**REMOVING CORPORAL PUNISHMENT
FROM SCHOOLS:
INTEGRATING PARTNER
EFFORTS**



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On behalf of an ad hoc group of individuals and
organizations against Corporal Punishment

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Background

Corporal punishment is an extremely controversial issue in Guyana, with deep divisions between those with opposing views on the subject.

In their work on the issue of corporal punishment, the organizations and individual activists who are part of the present initiative have so far dealt with it as part of a larger area of work addressing all forms of violence against children. Unfortunately, this has been an ineffective approach, which was made evident again in 2007 when a parliamentary motion to end corporal punishment in schools was introduced. It has been ineffective because while people will universally call for an end to violence against children, many teachers, parents and other stakeholders do not see corporal punishment as violence against children but rather as a reasonable and necessary disciplinary tool.

However, a specific focus on corporal punishment does not intend to isolate corporal punishment from the larger issue of violence against children. Rather, the intent is to start with corporal punishment as a separate issue in order to reconnect it to all forms of violence against children. Our experience has shown that unless we do this those who hold the position that corporal punishment is not violence will simply remain closed to a campaign to end it.

Not only is corporal punishment generally accepted as an appropriate means of discipline; there is little or no infrastructure to support caregivers in learning and practicing alternative forms of discipline. Many educators also believe that if corporal punishment were abolished, their already heavy workload would increase and their ability to earn extra income outside of school hours would be jeopardized. The result is that even though many parents and teachers recognize the problems with corporal punishment, they see no other way of coping with disciplining children.

Many Guyanese seem not to be concerned with arguments about Guyana's legal obligations as a signatory to the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC). In fact, developments in the media-based debate during 2007 and 2008 on the issue saw a strong public advocate of corporal punishment supporting his argument by claiming that

the Convention on the Rights of the Child does not address the question of corporal punishment.

At this time, there is an opportunity to begin the process of supporting the rights of children as defined in Article 19 of the Convention on the Rights of the Child. The issue continues to receive attention following Parliamentary debate of the motion to end school corporal punishment. The Education Act is in draft form and consultations to solicit public opinion on this issue among others have been completed. Civil society organizations have been working assiduously toward the abolition of corporal punishment and Parliamentary parties have indicated a willingness to further study this issue and attempt to come to a consensus position.

An ad-hoc committee made up of representatives of Red Thread, Help and Shelter and ACDA as well as other individuals committed to working to remove CP from schools has suggested that a two-prong approach that will influence public opinion on the one hand, and demonstrate that it is possible to create an environment that will support teachers and families during the change process on the other, is critical to obtaining the necessary support to ensure that corporal punishment is removed from schools.

Relatedly, since to date, advocacy against corporal punishment in schools has not differentiated between the views, needs and fears of different groups, the committee has suggested that as a first step, attitudes, beliefs and behaviours of children, parents and teachers toward corporal punishment be studied to assist in developing clearly focused campaign strategies and public education and training materials. To this end, the following activities were undertaken:

- Focus groups and administered questionnaires with parents, teachers and children
- Review of existing research dealing specifically with corporal punishment in Guyana
- Review of the political parties public statements on CP including the debate speeches from the 2007 budget debate on CP and in media articles from 2000 – 2008
- Review of articles and letters from non-political actors from 2000 -2008

- Key informant Interviews with Political Parties and MOE officials

The findings of these activities are not to be considered scientific results. Project Facilitators conducted focus groups in nine of Guyana's ten administrative regions with 135 teachers, 125 parents and 122 students. 250 surveys were also administered in four Regions. It was impossible to complete work in Region 8 due to weather conditions and time and logistical constraints. Every attempt was made to ensure that focus group participants reflected a range of ethnic, religious, social and economic backgrounds. However the sample was not a representative sample of the population.

This document is an internal document reporting on attitudes, beliefs and behaviours of particular target groups with respect to CP and offering recommendations with respect to how to develop an informed targeted awareness raising campaign and programme activities designed to eliminate CP in schools. This report is the result of the first phase of what is intended to be a long-term initiative.

Summary of Common Findings in Research on CP in Schools in Guyana

- Parents, teachers and students are overwhelmingly in favour of retaining CP
- CP is not considered to be violence against children
- Urban areas are more flexible with respect to removing CP from schools
- There is strong belief among parents and students that younger teachers are more likely to resort to CP and to administer CP more often than older teachers
- There is also strong belief among parents, teachers and students that female teachers are more likely to resort to CP and to administer CP more often than male teachers
- There is incongruence between a belief that CP is an acceptable form of discipline and the negative feelings of sadness and guilt felt by parents and teachers when administering CP and by children when they are receiving CP.
- There is also incongruence between a belief that CP is an acceptable form of discipline and responses from teachers that indicate that they do not believe CP is the most effective form of discipline, or that it improves lasting behaviour change and pupil performance. Teachers also indicate that it causes physical and emotional harm.
- Teachers do not follow the Ministry's disciplinary guidelines. They routinely administer CP in the classroom.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Literature dealing with the issue of CP in schools was compiled and reviewed. The literature review surveyed several documents dealing with violence against children in Guyana.

A thirty point paper aimed at eliminating CP in schools which was prepared by the MOE and announced in the media by then Chief Education Officer Mr. Ed Caesar in 2001 was unavailable. Neither the Minister's office nor senior education officials were able to locate the document. Documents surveyed include:

- Analysis of Public Consultations on Education Bill, Nicholas Wexler, 2006
- Report on Regional Consultations: Consultations done by the Task Group on the Proposed New Education Bill, Ministry of Education
- Red Thread study on Violence Against Women
- Recommendations by Help and Shelter in Relation to Proposed New Education Legislation, Help and Shelter
- Manual of Guidelines for the Maintenance of Order and Discipline, Ministry of Education
- Draft Plan of Education Bill for Guyana, E. St. Hilaire Bruce-Lyle
- Undergraduate Primary Teachers' Views of Corporal Punishment in Schools in Guyana, (Anderson, Bernard and Moriah, 2004)
- Voices of Children: Experiences With Violence: MLHSS, Red Thread, Unicef
- Various Newspaper articles between 2000 and 2008 (Stabroek News)
- Draft Education Bill
- Debate Speeches, Corporal Punishment Motion, June, 2007 Parliament Office

The findings of research that dealt specifically with corporal punishment in school are summarized as follows:

Education Task Force Report

The Education Task Force carried out forty-two consultations across the country in which the public had the opportunity to express their opinions on what they hoped to see in a new Education Act. The consultations solicited opinions about governance of public schools, identified problems with the current regional education system, and examined issues with respect to curriculum, teacher performance, school attendance, school placement, rights of the child and student welfare and discipline.

The final report of the Education Task Force is complete but has not yet been released; however, a summary of the preliminary findings by Nicholas Wexler dated June, 2006 indicates the following findings with respect to discipline in schools.

The consultations found that overwhelmingly, respondents reported that they believed CP should be maintained in schools; however, more respondents in urban areas favoured its abolition. The primary reasons for maintaining CP were:

- It is an effective means of discipline
- It should be maintained but only administered for certain clearly defined infractions
- Student behaviour has been deteriorating and will get worse if teachers cannot administer CP
- It should only be administered by Head Teachers or senior teachers
- It is sanctioned in the Bible
- It is a part of Guyanese culture and will therefore any attempt to remove CP will be resisted

The small minority that favoured the abolition of CP did so for the following reasons:

- It is necessary for Guyana to keep up with modernized societies who overwhelmingly oppose CP
- CP is not effective, there are more effective ways of getting through to a child
- CP hurts the physical and emotional well-being of a child

Advocates of abolishing CP suggested the following as alternative methods of discipline

- Counseling
- Suspension

- Detention
- Teacher parent meetings
- School chores

Undergraduate Primary Teachers' Views of Corporal Punishment in Schools in Guyana (Anderson, Bernard and Moriah, 2004)

This University of Guyana Study surveyed 118 undergraduate teachers at UG seeking information about their views, beliefs, behaviours and personal histories with respect to CP and studied how corporal punishment was actually used against the Ministry's disciplinary guidelines.

This study found that 79 percent of teachers surveyed felt CP should be retained. Sixteen percent said it should be removed or were undecided. Despite the strong support for the retention of CP in schools, responses with respect to its effectiveness and effects on recipients were mixed. For example:

- Only 18.6% said that CP is the best way to instill discipline in pupils
- Only 33% said that CP produces lasting changes in behaviour
- Only 40% said that CP improves pupil's achievement
- 62.6% felt that CP causes physical injury
- 47.5% felt that CP causes emotional trauma

In this study, younger teachers were more likely than older teachers to support the retention of CP and older teachers were less likely to think that it was the best method of discipline or that it improved students' achievement.

Teachers that supported the retention of CP identified the following punishments as deserving CP:

- Fighting 92%
- Cursing, bad language and damaging school property 74.6%
- Being rude or unmannerly 65.9%
- Telling untruths 50%
- Not doing homework 47.5%

Most felt it shouldn't be used for infractions such as doing poorly in school, tardiness, chewing gums and breaking school rules about playing before class.

Younger teachers seemed to reflect the following view of three young teachers surveyed:

Pupils lose respect for teachers; they are becoming more unmanageable and rude. I believe in CP because it had a lot do with the success in life.

I think pupils should get lashes at times for bad behaviour. I feel it helps to discipline you and cause you to think of what to do before you do it. Most pupils become disrespectful when CP is not administered in schools.

95 percent of the teachers surveyed reported that they had received CP as children. However, despite the fact that the majority did not believe that CP produces lasting changes in behaviour and indicated that CP causes physical and emotional damage, the same respondents indicated that CP made them into better people as adults and improved their academic performance.

Older teachers were more likely to argue for the long-term benefits of CP and younger teachers for the short-term and immediate control the punishment offered.

Teachers in this study felt that all teachers should be able to administer CP in their classroom. Responses with respect to where and how CP was administered indicated that many teachers were either unaware of the MOE guidelines on discipline or were choosing to disregard the policy.

The high emphasis on unquestioning obedience and unquestioning behaviour is regarded as being positively linked with childhood history of severe punishment and submission to parental authority. (Arnold, 1982)

Voices of Children: Experiences with Violence, (Speek-Warnerey, 2005)

Red Thread, MHSSS and UNICEF's joint study seeks to address the impact of different forms of violence on the lives of children in Guyana. One section dealt specifically with CP in schools. The findings of that section are summarized below.

When asked whether it was acceptable for teachers to beat them 73 – 77% of primary children said yes and 50 – 64% of secondary students said yes.

Teachers in this study, while aware of the MOE Guidelines on Discipline indicated that they kept a whip in the classroom which was used to administer CP. They expressed the opinion that without CP the classroom would be chaotic and that they would be unable to teach. In particular, teachers felt that children who received CP at home would only respond to CP in the classroom.

Children surveyed identified the following punishments as deserving CP:

- Fighting in School 42%
- Disobeying teacher 39%
- Not doing schoolwork well 21%
- Keeping noise/playing in class 14%
- Being rude/talking back 10%

Older children indicated that teachers often used CP for inappropriate reasons which they identified as having something personal against the child or taking their frustrations out on the child. They also said that teachers beat too hard or too often and expressed concern that children might retaliate against teachers with violence.

Both older and younger children mentioned being physically or emotionally harmed by CP including physical injury, humiliation resulting in being unable to focus on schoolwork and fear of asking the teachers questions.

Red Thread Study on Women and Violence

A section of this extensive study on women and violence focused specifically on domestic violence and addressed the issue of corporal punishment. Highlights from this section follow:

It is evident that 'getting licks', slaps, and beating is not perceived as abuse by the varying answers to differently worded questions regarding discipline and abuse. For example, although only 32.1% of all women said that they experienced abuse as a child, 84.2% said that they had experienced licks, slaps, beating. In addition, 81.3% of respondents answered the question, 'How did the physical/verbal abuse make you feel?' which, again, indicates that the number of women who experienced childhood abuse is much greater than 32.1%.

In approximately eight out of ten cases of childhood abuse it was the respondent's mother or other female relative who had administered this abuse. However, for sexual abuse it was invariably male relatives who were responsible.

When asked about specific forms of violence against anyone including children, many more of the women reported being responsible for physical and verbal abuse (but not for other kinds of violence). Nearly 60 per cent of the women had been responsible for hitting or slapping at least occasionally (59.1%). Most of this hitting and slapping had been against the respondent's children (67.2%), rather than an adult such as a partner (15.8%), parent (10.9%), other relative, friend, or stranger.

Extreme physical violence such as wounding was much less common (8.4%) and invariably directed towards their partner (91.6%). Verbal abuse was a relatively common action. Nearly 30 per cent of the women had been responsible for cursing at least occasionally (29.1%) and most of this cursing had been directed toward the respondent's partner (60.9%) or children (17.2%). A smaller number of women had sometimes made threats of violence (12.5%), mostly to their partner (56.8%), children (16.2%) or a parent (13.5%).

The majority of all women in the survey felt that children should be punished in some form (70.0%). Responses were similar across class but varied across ethnic groups. The majority of Afro-Guyanese women, but a minority of Indo-Guyanese women, felt that children should be punished.

Women were also asked how children should be punished and how they punished their children. When the women who agreed that children should be punished were asked about how children should be punished, the most common response was hitting,

slapping, and/or lashing. Out of all the respondents hitting was seen as the most agreed upon form of punishment by nearly a third (30.8%). A slightly smaller percentage believed privileges should be withdrawn (26.2%) or that children should be grounded (18.1%). This pattern changes somewhat when women were asked how they actually did punish children. In all cases, corporal punishment was used more than when women were asked the hypothetical question of how children should be punished. Moreover, for both questions, corporal punishment was the common form of punishment. Approximately one in four women with children discipline them by means of physical violence.

A slightly higher proportion, over 40 percent of all the respondents (42.5%), responded to the question, "From what age do you think hitting children should begin?" Out of these respondents, most of the women indicated that toddler (26.5%) or pre-school ages (27.2%) were the most appropriate ages to begin hitting, followed by between one and two years (16.9%) and school age (six years old and older) (16.7%). Very few women indicated that from birth (2.9%) or between six months to one year of age was appropriate (5.1%). Very few indicated that there was no special age to begin hitting (3.7%).

179 women responded to the question, "What do you hit children for?" This is 64 more women than the number who said hitting is acceptable and 115 more than the number who earlier admitted to hitting their children. This number is 55.9% of all respondents and 72.2% of all respondents with children. Nearly 50 per cent of the responses indicate that one of the main reasons children are hit is for misbehaviour (47.5%), while over 20 per cent of the responses indicate that another main reason children are hit is for disobedience (21.2%). Rudeness or insolence accounted for 7.3% of responses.

The same number of women responded to the question, "How do you feel after you hit children?" The majority of these women indicated that they feel sad, guilty, sorry, or badly after hitting children (62.4%). Many women, however, indicated that they felt no different afterwards (18.2%) or that they felt good or justified after hitting their children (13.3%). Indo-Guyanese women were the most likely to feel remorseful and least likely to feel vindicated by their actions.

POLITICAL PARTIES

Corporal Punishment has been a vexing issue for political parties and civil society organizations in Guyana for many years. However, the debate was re-ignited recently when a motion calling for the abolition of CP in schools was presented to parliament.

The motion came before the house six years after President Bharrat Jagdeo spoke out publicly against CP in his address to a national forum on child abuse in November 2000 (SN November 28, 2000), six years after then Minister of Education Dr Dale Bisnauth publicly announced his opposition to CP in October, 2000. (Chronicle, October 19, 2000) and five years after then Chief Education Officer Mr. Ed Caesar announced a thirty-point paper developed with the intention of ensuring the elimination of CP in Schools (SN June 15, 2001). This was not a new issue to Guyana, it was one that had been researched, debated and according to the Ministry of Education in 2001, resolved by civil

“A new child in a new primary school just leaving nursery and she beat him. If you see his back, covered with welts and still bleeding. I cannot understand for the life of me, what a five-year old child could have done to provoke such wrath, for this child to be beaten so severely and savagely.” Dr Dale Bisnauth, Former Minister of Education discussing an incident involving CP in a government school.

society organizations, political parties and government over many years.

Prior to the 2007 parliamentary debate, CSOs and interested individuals who had been advocating for an end to CP before the motion was introduced publicly spoke out in favour of the motion, launching a campaign and other actions in its support.

While the ruling PPP/C was initially publicly dismissive with respect to the motion, media attention and pressure from groups supporting the motion appeared to open the door with respect to the party's willingness to further study and come to consensus on this issue. Particularly encouraging were public statements against CP by the Honourable Minister of Human Services and Social Security Ms. Priya Manickchand and PPP representatives who voiced the party's opposition to CP in schools to the Education Task Force that was at the time carrying out consultations on the Draft Education Bill.

Finally, then First Lady Mrs. Varshinie Jagdeo as well as President Jagdeo and former Minister of Education Dr. Dale Bisnauth, as noted above, had previously issued public statements against CP, all of which seemed to indicate that there was a possibility of successfully passing the motion.

Privately, Ministers and Cabinet Members indicated their personal support for the motion and offered to exert their influence with the ruling PPP.

The main opposition party the PNC/R also indicated a desire to discuss the motion further prior to the debate although their position against the motion was more rigid than the PPP's and was closely aligned to the evangelical churches which the PNC/R consider a strong constituency and which strongly rejects the abolition of CP in schools.

In parliament GAP/ROAR indicated their support for the motion and outside of parliament the WPA was vociferously in favour of the motion and actively engaged in the civil society campaign. Civil society organizations backing the motion supported an attempt to achieve consensus and so, to this end, the motion was postponed for a period of six months.

But over the six months it became increasingly apparent that despite publicly being on record as being opposed to CP in schools, the PPP was hardening its position against the motion. Individuals in the PPP who privately supported the motion made it known to the AFC that the party had no intention of offering its support.

The PNC did not make itself available for discussion of the motion until the day before the debate was scheduled to take place in June, 2007. At this time, the PNC/R offered an amendment which effectively took the issue out of parliament and placed it solely with the Education Task Force saying that the findings of the public consultations needed to be considered. It was already clear at this time, that the Education Task Force consultations demonstrated widespread support for the retention of CP in schools. This amendment would therefore have bolstered the argument that CP should be retained. With civil society support, the AFC rejected the amendment and proceeded to the debate. The National Assembly voted overwhelmingly against the motion and eventually the Draft Education Bill in section 52 addressed CP as follows:

52. (1) Subject to subsection (7) and (8), corporal punishment may be administered to a student in schools as the occasion arises

(a) In accordance with subsection (2) and;

(b) If no other punishment is considered suitable or effective in the particular case

(2) Corporal punishment may be administered

(a) By the principal, deputy principal or a teacher specifically designated by the principal for the purpose

(b) In the principal's office or other private room in the school in the presence of another teacher

(c) Using an instrument prescribed by the Regulations and

(d) In conformity with any written guidelines issued by the Chief Education Officer

(3) Where corporal punishment is administered an entry shall be made in a punishment book and is to be kept in the school for the purpose of indicating the nature and extent of the punishment and the reasons for administering it

The Act describes penalties for contravening the Act and gives the Minister the authority to suspend or abolish CP by an Order published in the Gazette. This provision indicates at some level a willingness to remain open to the possibility of working toward the removal of CP in schools.

Section 50 (1) of the Draft Education Bill also appears to indicate an attempt to offer flexibility to individual schools that may wish to choose to disallow CP under its internal policy. It reads:

The principal of a public school or an assisted private school may, after consultation with its board of management, if any, make rules to govern the attire, conduct and discipline of students.

The debate speeches are currently being edited for inclusion in the Hansard and will be available through the parliamentary library shortly.

A summary of the arguments of the parliamentary parties on the issue follows:

Chantalle Smith

Ms. Chantalle Smith presented the Motion to the National Assembly. She and Mr. Khemraj Ramjattan spoke in defense of the motion for the AFC. The following is a summary of the main arguments in their presentations.

- Guyana is a signatory to the Convention of the Rights of the Child and is therefore bound by its provisions. The committee on the CRC has publicly admonished that Guyana should prohibit CP by law
- The President, two former Ministers of Education and senior officials in the Ministry of Education six years ago acknowledged that CP should be removed from schools
- Under the current Administration the PPP stated that it is opposed to CP during their consultation with the Education Task Force
- The MLHSS and UNICEF Study on Children and Violence indicated that the Ministry's disciplinary policies are not being followed and that children in the study reported being physically and emotionally damaged by CP and describe it as having a negative impact on their learning.

Ms. Smith also:

- Highlighted positive elements of Ministry's disciplinary policy, specifically, alternative forms of discipline suggested in the policy
- Highlighted several incidents of children having been severely injured while receiving corporal punishment in school after the MOE had developed and put into effect its Disciplinary Guidelines which were supposed to ensure that corporal punishment was administered "responsibly"
- Summarized research on the negative effects of CP on recipients as children and throughout their lives

- Provided information about best practices with respect to alternative forms of discipline in other countries and suggested resources for the Ministry and educators

Khemraj Ramjattan

- Reiterated Guyana's support for the CRC emphasizing that both the PNC and the PPP had agreed to ratifying the convention thereby being bound by its provisions
- Reviewed Guyana's record with respect to signing and then reneging on international agreements with specific reference to the CRC, the Optional Protocol and the Latimer House Principle
- Reviewed the civil society statement in support of the motion and highlighted the prominent signatories

Hon. Shaik Baksh

The Honourable Minister of Education Mr. Shaik Baksh spoke against the motion for the PPP/C. The following is a summary of his arguments

- Acknowledged that the country is divided on the issue of CP in schools
- Highlighted recent letters in the press in support of retaining corporal punishment in schools and stated that generally Guyanese people believe that violence in schools and in society generally will increase if CP is abolished.
- Indicated that the government has established the Education Task Force for the purpose of consulting on this issue and stated that the government would have preferred for the debate to have been postponed until the Task Force had completed its work.
- Expressed regret that the motion did not consider CP in the home
- Stated that legislating against CP does not always result in a decreased use of CP – that supportive work would also be required and concluded that on this basis, “rushing into” legislation might not be desirable.
- Quoted from the Ministry's Disciplinary Policy and emphasized that CP is meant to be a last resort and administered only by head teachers or senior teachers.

- Spoke about Ministry studies on schools using CP in Guyana and schools where CP is not administered and announced government's intention to study the differences in performance and levels of student violence between these schools
- Acknowledged incidents in which children have been harmed by CP and announced that government has taken steps to ensure compliance with the disciplinary policy
- Moved that the PNC/R motion be accepted leaving CP in the hands of the Education Task Force

Amna Ally

Ms. Amna Ally spoke for the PNC/R against the original motion and in favour of the PNCR amendment. Highlights of her speech follow:

- Indicated that leaving this issue with the Education Task Force as her amendment suggested did not mean that it could be left to languish indefinitely. Rather the Government has a responsibility to ensure that the Education Task Force finishes its work in a timely fashion.
- Spoke about various views on CP and stated that MOE needs to deal with the issue in an holistic way through education policy, management of the system, etc
- Stated that the PNCR doesn't believe in violence against children or in creating an opening for teachers to be attacked.
- Stated that the PNCR believes in streamlining the mission and policies of the MOE.
- Stated that the Education Task Force must be allowed to complete its work and that a Select Committee be allowed to proceed with implementation issues.

At July 14, 2008 interviews with the Education Task Force indicate that the Report of the Task Force has been completed and submitted to the Minister. The Report has not been made public at this time.

None of the parties indicate a shift in their positions on the issue of CP and none are presently actively working on the issue.

SUMMARY OF ATTITUDES AND OPINIONS TOWARD CP – TEACHERS

The following is a summary of information obtained from focus groups with teachers.

Beliefs about Whether CP Should Be Retained

Findings from focus groups and questionnaires with teachers are for the most part congruent with findings from earlier studies summarized in the literature review above.

Teachers are overwhelmingly in favour of retaining CP in schools. They said that CP gives teachers authority in the classroom, acts as a deterrent to bad behaviour and is necessary in some cases to get children to do their work. They also state that children from homes in which parents use CP do not respond to other punishments. Eighty three percent of teachers surveyed feel that class teachers should be allowed to administer CP; however, only fifteen percent feel that a teacher that is not the class teacher should be allowed to administer it.

While teachers strongly believe in retaining CP, their attitudes, comments and opinions during the discussion often reflected that their attachment to CP was less about a belief that it was the most effective method of discipline or that it produced long-term behavioural change and more about practical issues related to resources and conditions in the classroom.

Although the discussion started with teachers speaking about the necessity of CP as a disciplinary tool, they often spoke about large class sizes and lack of supporting personnel such as School Welfare Officers as reasons for the necessity for CP as the discussion progressed. With class sizes of fifty and more students in the government schools teachers indicated that they need to use CP as it is the only method that produces immediate compliance and is therefore the only way that they can manage their large classes.

When asked why teachers resort to CP seventy eight percent of teachers said that it was the only way to make children “hear” when they misbehave. Only six percent said that teachers beat children because they take out their own frustrations by using CP as

compared to nineteen percent of children and eighty-two percent of parents who believe that teachers beat children as a result of their own frustrations.

Private school teachers while also supporting the retention of CP tend to be more flexible in their attitudes. They report smaller class sizes and more supportive resources which allow them to use alternative methods of discipline more effectively. These attitudes reflect the attitudes expressed in a University of Guyana Study of primary school teachers summarized in the literature review above.

Ninety seven percent of teachers said that children always deserve it when they are beaten compared to thirteen percent of children who hold this view. However, during the discussion many teachers qualified the remark by saying “they always deserve it when I beat them”. They acknowledge that in some cases children are beaten based on inaccurate information or when teachers react too hastily, resorting to CP when another method could have been used effectively.

Awareness of and Compliance with the Ministry’s Disciplinary Guidelines

Although ninety two percent of teachers are aware of the MOE disciplinary policy, only five percent said that they had seen or read the document and their understanding of its provisions with respect to CP vary.

Teachers feel that a policy that does not allow class teachers to administer CP in the current school environment will fail as teachers will be unable to establish authority in the classroom. As was the case in the *Voices of Children* study, many teachers indicate that they keep a small whip in their classroom to use to threaten students or to administer CP despite the Ministry guidelines.

Respondents state that it is necessary for class teachers to administer CP as it is disruptive to other students if the teacher has to leave the classroom to take a child to the head teacher. Most stated that Head Teachers are aware that teachers administer CP in the classroom.

Experience with and Perceptions about the Results of not Being Allowed to Administer CP in the Classroom

When questioned about their experience of teaching without CP forty-five percent of teachers said that they have taught without using CP or knew someone who had taught without using CP. Twenty-eight percent of teachers who were surveyed said that behaviour in classrooms that don't use CP is no different than behaviour in classrooms where CP is used and fifteen percent said it was better. Thirty five percent said that they didn't have enough information to form an opinion. Only twenty two percent of teachers said that in their experience behaviour in classrooms without CP is worse than in classrooms where CP was used.

However, the overwhelming response to theoretical questions about the results of banning CP in classrooms was negative. When asked the theoretical question "What would happen if teachers were not allowed to use CP in the classroom?" ninety-one percent of teachers said that without CP chaos would reign, students would not perform well academically and that violence in schools would increase. Only one percent of teachers responding to theoretical questions about a CP ban feel that behavior and performance would improve without CP. Eight percent feel there would be no change in behaviour.

In many cases, the same teachers that said they had taught in classrooms that didn't allow CP and reported that behaviour was no different or better than in the classrooms where they did use CP agreed with the opinion that a CP ban would result in chaos in the classrooms.

Propensity to Use CP between Older vs. Younger and Male vs. Female Teachers

Forty-five percent of teachers believe that older teachers are more likely to resort to CP than younger teachers and thirty-one percent felt there was no difference between older teachers and younger teachers' propensity to use CP. Older teachers were perceived to administer CP from a position of authority, and out of a desire to improve behaviour while younger teachers were perceived to be far more likely to resort to CP before trying other methods of discipline because it was the only way that they could command authority and produce behaviour change.

Thirty-two percent of respondents felt that female teachers were more likely to beat than male teachers and forty-five percent felt there was no difference between male teachers and female teachers' propensity to use CP. Males are perceived to have a more natural authority while respondents feel that females have to use CP to establish authority in the classroom. In addition, respondents feel that females are more emotional and are affected by hormones during pregnancy and during their monthly cycles which cause them to be quicker to resort to CP. Finally, females are believed to have more "stress" related to balancing the responsibilities of home, family and work which they take out on the children in their classes.

Experiences with and Feelings about Administering CP

Most teachers reported receiving CP as children. They spoke about their feelings of fear, resentment or anger at receiving CP at the time. However the overwhelming majority felt that in the long term, CP has contributed positively to their moral development and made them better, more disciplined students and adults.

Twenty-one percent of teachers reported feeling good and twenty five percent reported neutral feelings about administering CP, expressing the view that they feel satisfied because it produces the desired result. However, fifty-four percent reported negative feelings after administering CP. Younger teachers said that they have a sense of trepidation about the reaction of the administration or parents and feel vulnerable after administering CP. Their comments indicate some confusion about what is acceptable and demonstrate a lack of awareness in the schools and among parents of the Ministry's disciplinary policy. Some comments about these feelings include:

I feel exhausted afterwards. I am scared because I wonder if I did it the right way. I wonder if it will pose a problem especially with high coloured children when it might leave a mark.

I am scared of getting into trouble. One time a parent came in and I had to produce the whip I used and explain myself.

Parents feel that it is their child and no one should beat their child but they need to realize that the teacher is a surrogate parent. Some even beat at home but don't want the teacher to beat.

Many parents give teachers the authority to lash and then when you beat the child they get upset. Parents should have to sign toward what they want for their children. Teachers need to be protected

Most teachers had witnessed or been involved in incidents in which angry parents confronted a teacher who had administered CP to their child.

In some cases teachers reported feeling guilty for having beaten the child and stated that they try to make it up to them in other ways.

Circumstances under Which Teachers would Support a Ban of CP in Schools

There were very few negative responses to the question “Are there any circumstances under which you would support a ban on CP in schools?” Teachers indicated that there were circumstances under which they would support a ban but were very clear that they would not favour a ban unless the conditions were in place first. Even when they imagined the conditions being in place however, it remained difficult for them to imagine managing their classrooms without the threat of CP.

Sixty-one percent of teachers said that they would support a ban on CP if they were given training on how to address challenging behaviours and alternative methods of discipline and if there were supporting personnel including school welfare workers, social workers, guidance counselors and truancy officers in schools. Twenty-nine percent said that they would support a ban on CP if research showed that it had a negative impact on children and ten percent said that they would be influenced to change their views on CP in schools by a respected person.

In some cases teachers expressed distrust of the Ministry saying that they would be reluctant to support a ban in any circumstances because the Ministry frequently announces initiatives in which they are to receive training or resources which never materialize. Specifically, teachers mentioned the appointment of School Welfare Officers and training in alternative forms of discipline.

Challenges and Opportunities

Working with the Ministry of Education

There was tremendous difficulty accessing the Minister's Office with respect to interviewing the Minister and obtaining his sanction for the project. After repeated requests the Minister granted one phone interview during which he indicated that the Ministry was awaiting the report of the Education Task Force, working on the Draft Education Bill and considering the views of all Guyanese on this issue.

Calls to the Junior Minister were not returned. After several messages her secretary indicated that she was aware of the project but had said that the Ministry will be working on all "school issues" in due course.

Senior staff at the Ministry was able to provide some assistance; however, they are constrained by Ministry directives, heavy workloads and a lack of human and other resources. Ministry staff was willing to speak off of the record and to offer advice on negotiating the bureaucracy and accessing teachers and students.

Teacher Participation in Interventions

Head teachers and teachers demonstrated reluctance to act independently in seeking information and professional development opportunities. Although the Ministry's policy does not require teachers to obtain permission to attend meetings, training events and other activities related to their profession unless the events are scheduled during working hours, most teachers and head teachers will not attend events without the MOE's official sanction. The Ministry seems not to have a standard process for obtaining permission for activities resulting in a long, bureaucratic approval procedure.

The REOs also seem to be of the opinion that teachers require permission to attend activities whether during our outside of school hours but generally are more responsive to requests for permission for teachers to attend activities than the central Ministry.

Opportunities

Legislation:

The Draft Education Bill allows individual schools to make decisions with respect to discipline. This presents an opportunity for a campaign that begins with the schools rather than with the Ministry. Direct interventions with the schools present an opportunity to work with Head Teachers who are more open to exploring new approaches and who will more likely agree to abolish CP.

In addition, it might be helpful to work closely with the REOs who are more knowledgeable about and directly involved in the administration of the schools in their regions.

Demonstrated Flexibility with Respect to Attitudes Beliefs and Behaviour Re: CP

Teachers appear to be less rigid in their attitudes, beliefs and behaviours than assumed. Generally they seemed committed to taking a professional approach to their work and operating in the best interest of children.

In many cases teachers described the focus groups as “educational” and expressed interest in “follow up activities”. Many said that they had never closely analysed their feelings about CP and felt differently about some of the issues at the end of the Focus Group than they had at the beginning. This was especially true when there was a strong voice against CP in the group.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR PHASE TWO ACTIVITIES WITH TEACHERS

Ministry of Education

While it might be possible to proceed without the approval of the MOE it is desirable to have the Minister’s blessing for the project. It is therefore recommended that a strategic team meet with the Minister to make him and other senior MOE personnel aware of the project and seek to obtain his support for project activities. ROEs should also be briefed and kept abreast of project activities.

Attempts to engage the Ministry any further at this stage will likely prove futile. The Ministry has tended to be responsive to public opinion and media pressure on this issue. At the moment the Minister feels that that public opinion as expressed during the Education Task Force consultations is strongly in favour of retaining CP and has signalled his resolve to act in response to public opinion by including CP in the new Education Act.

It will therefore be most effective to:

1. Identify schools as schools with a view to demonstrating the benefits of abolishing CP and
2. Build community support for the schools through parents, teachers and project partners.
3. Use these networks to assist in influencing parents, teachers, colleagues, the Ministry and public opinion generally

This approach begins with those most directly affected by the issue.

Influencing Teachers' Attitudes Toward CP

Very few teachers indicated that media campaigns, celebrity endorsements, views of a respected colleague or mentor or evidence that CP is harmful to students would influence their opinion about CP. Teachers overwhelmingly indicated that they would be far more open to supporting the removal of CP only if they knew that they would have the tools and resources to deal with situations in their classrooms. Teachers particularly called for:

- Training in alternative forms of discipline
- Access to supportive professionals such as social workers, guidance counselors and School Welfare Officers

Teachers' concerns with respect to removing CP from schools are rooted in practical concerns about their ability to manage the classroom without it. Teachers also expressed concern that alternative forms of discipline were time-consuming and would affect their ability to earn extra income. Specifically, several teachers expressed concerns about the impact that devoting extra time to supervise punishments such as

detention, after school chores, marking extra work given as punishment among others would have on their ability to supplement their income by offering out of school lessons.

Intervention

It would be most effective to work in target schools with supportive Head Teachers through the Regional Education Officers. As a first step, facilitators would sensitise teachers and solicit their input with respect to working toward eliminating CP in their schools. Specifically, it would be appropriate to offer sessions to:

- Make teachers aware of what the new legislation says about CP. Particularly, that the legislation does not allow them to administer CP in their classrooms. In addition the penalties for breaches of the Act should be conveyed.
- Provide space for teachers to identify their concerns about what removing CP means to their ability to manage their classrooms and their free time.
- Involve teachers in designing realistic, implementable interventions that take into account those concerns and incorporate suggestions for including students and parents.
- Identify resources, partners and supports and develop a plan for implementation of activities with teachers. For example, volunteer social workers and counselors in the community can be trained to support the schools.
- Articulate the conditions under which these activities will take place and assign responsibilities for particular tasks.
- Identify and establish mechanisms to establish the situation with respect to student behaviour and performance and teachers' ability to manage the classroom and complete the syllabus pre and post intervention.
- Design tools to monitor activities and measure the programme's effectiveness
- Solicit teachers' commitment to work on the initiatives as agreed.



SUMMARY OF ATTITUDES AND OPINIONS TOWARD CP - PARENTS

The following is a summary of information obtained from focus groups with parents.

Beliefs about Whether CP Should Be Retained

Ninety-two percent of participating parents feel strongly that CP should be retained in schools; however, eighty-seven percent stated that only the Head Teacher or class teacher should administer CP. Parents feel that teachers that do not have regular contact with a child, including substitute teachers, don't have love for the child and therefore would be more likely to resort to CP before trying other forms of discipline or take their personal frustrations out on children. They also state that if the authority to administer CP is not restricted other school staff such as canteen staff, security and administrative staff will also feel they have the right to beat children.

Parents who believe that CP should be retained state that it is the most effective form of discipline. CP is perceived to be an effective deterrent and the surest way to guarantee that negative behaviours are not repeated. Parents perceive that spanking improves behaviour and has a positive impact on development and academic performance.

Parents in favour of retaining CP state that as societal violence increases it becomes essential to use force to discipline children. Many parents agree with comments such as "Times are more violent so we need to use violence to make children hear" and "some children only learn by force". Some parents felt that beating was preferable to other forms of punishment considered to be alternatives. This comment by a parent was echoed in several focus groups.

I prefer beating to kneeling down or cleaning the compound as those other punishments affect health. Kneeling down might give them a cold and since most schools don't have water/sanitary facilities they can't wash hands after cleaning. So beating is better.

Finally, parents generally believe that having experienced CP themselves contributed to their own positive development and achievement throughout life.

The small percentage of parents who oppose CP were very strong in their opinions that CP should be abolished in schools. These parents expressed the opinion that CP is violence and should be considered abuse and that as professionals teachers should use other methods of discipline. These parents felt that children whose parents took an active interest in their child's behaviour at school and established a relationship with the teacher were less likely to misbehave at school. These parents share the perception that teachers take their frustrations out on children.

Comment by a parent

"We need education and training for adults. We blame the children but we are the role models and we should be doing better"

Perceptions about Why CP is administered

Parents most frequently identified fighting, stealing, disrespecting the teacher and not doing homework as behaviours that deserve CP. Parents felt that CP should not be used when children fail to understand or complete schoolwork because they felt that teachers often didn't explain work properly. Talking in class and noisemaking are considered minor offenses that could be punished by doing extra work such as writing lines, picking up papers in the schoolyard or by detention.

When asked what motivated teachers to resort to CP the most frequent answers were as follows:

- Teachers beat children when children misbehave (80%)
- Teachers have their own problems and take it out on children (82%)
- Teachers beat children because they have no other way of making them hear (61%)

When asked about how they feel when their child receives CP parents most said that their feelings depended on the reason for and severity of the punishment. However 93% said that they had been angered by cases where they considered CP administered to their child to be harsh and /or abusive. A majority of parents also indicated feeling sad or guilty when they administer CP to their children.

These responses indicate that while parents maintain a strong, often emotional, belief in CP as a disciplinary tool they also believe that CP is misused and that their children have suffered excessively harsh or abusive punishments at the hands of their teachers.

Parents described feelings about their child receiving punishment they considered to be excessive

“My boy is bad and he always gets licks but one time a teacher threw the duster at him and I was very upset, she could have injured him.”

“My son came home with a swollen hand from a beating. I said I would talk to the teacher but if I went I would have cussed her so I never went. I was afraid of how I would have behaved I was so angry.”

Perceptions of the Results of not Being Allowed to Administer CP in the Classroom

Seventy-four percent of parents polled felt that without CP there would be chaos in classrooms. They described “chaos” as increased violence between students and toward teachers, children coming to school with weapons, lawlessness and frequent disruptions in the classroom, increased tardiness and truancy and an environment of disrespect toward authority.

Although only eight percent felt that CP should be abolished, twenty-three percent of respondents felt that children would be better behaved and two percent felt that there would be no change in behaviour in classrooms where CP was not used. As with much of the discussion, attitudes about the need to retain CP in schools were softer when respondents thought about the issue from a different perspective.

Perceptions of Propensity to Use CP between Older vs. Younger and Male vs. Female Teachers

Most parents felt that younger teachers resort to CP more quickly and more frequently than older teachers. Older teachers are perceived to be more experienced, loving, professional and patient as well as more knowledgeable about how to manage their classroom.

Younger teachers were perceived as seeing teaching as a job rather than as a profession. Parents said that younger teachers are less likely to take advantage of professional development activities, focusing instead on getting through the month and collecting their pay cheques. In addition, parents perceived younger teachers as immature, rash and impatient, all characteristics that they believe make them more likely to administer CP than older teachers.

Female teachers were perceived as more likely to resort to CP than males. Many parents had no experience with male teachers so were responding on perception rather than on experience. Parents generally agreed that children were more likely to see male teachers as having more authority than female teachers and would therefore be more likely to behave with a male teacher. Parents also perceived that female teachers are affected by hormones associated with pregnancy and their monthly cycle and are naturally more emotional than males.

Parents in Regions 4 and 10 were of the view that the teacher's level of social intelligence plays a significant role in whether or not they choose CP. They felt that more socially intelligent teachers were more open to new ideas and therefore more likely to try other methods of discipline.

Experiences with Classrooms in which CP was not used

When asked to compare behaviour in classrooms where there was no CP to classrooms where CP was used, 40 percent of parents said that behaviour is better or no different in classrooms with no CP and 60 percent said it was worse. However, the majority of parents interviewed said they had no experience with classrooms that didn't use CP.

Most parents reporting experience with classrooms that did not use CP indicated positive experiences. These parents stated that there was a rapport and mutual respect between teachers and students that resulted in better behaviour and better performance. Others with direct experience reported that the classroom functioned no differently than classrooms using CP.

Circumstances under which Parents would Support a Ban on CP in Schools

Parents reported that they would support a ban on CP if schools were given the resources to train teachers in alternative forms of discipline and teachers were supported by other professionals such as guidance counselors, social workers and School Welfare Officers. They also supported more parental involvement in schools and counseling and parenting programmes for families with children displaying behavioural problems.

Factors influencing Parents' attitudes toward CP

Parents' attitudes and beliefs about CP are unlikely to be influenced by media campaigns or celebrity endorsements. Instead, parents indicate that they are most likely to be influenced by someone close to them being negatively impacted (62%), Negatively impacted in this case can be assumed to mean severe injury or impact as almost all of the parents interviewed reported that their children had received CP that they considered to be harsh or abusive.

Fifty-six percent of parents reported that the opinion of a pastor, community leader or other respected individual would have significant influence on their opinion about CP. Forty percent said that research showing that CP negatively impacts children and/or causes them to be violent would have significant influence on their opinion about this issue.

Comment: Long ago children were better behaved because teachers were allowed to beat. Those children turned out to be doctors lawyers etc.

Challenges and Opportunities

Challenges

The major challenge to changing parental attitudes and beliefs is breaking through the deeply ingrained belief in CP. Parents appear to believe in CP with a "blind faith" that even personal negative experience and feelings of guilt and sadness after administering CP do not shake. In addition, parents do not consider CP to be violence or abuse unless

there is severe physical damage. However, there is evidence to suggest that as they themselves say, information and analysis might be effective in changing beliefs.

Opportunities

After participating in the discussion, many parents reported that their views and beliefs about CP in the classroom had changed, saying that they had never considered many of the issues before. In particular, they hadn't thought about the fact that classrooms without CP functioned the same or better than classrooms that use CP.

Parents reported that they felt more open to the idea of advocating for the use of other methods of discipline, and felt that parents needed to take more control of what happens to their child in school.

In addition, parents were open to examining their roles and responsibilities with respect to their children's behaviour in school and indicated a willingness to participate in programmes and activities and to work more closely with teachers with respect to discipline in the classroom.

Very few parents indicated that media campaigns or celebrity endorsements would influence their opinion about CP and few have changed their attitudes when their children have been negatively affected by CP. Therefore a campaign to influence parental attitudes about CP would be most effective if it:

- Is a community-based initiative that Involves respected community leaders
- Provides factual information from someone perceived as an expert about how CP negatively impacts children
- Includes training for teachers in alternative forms of discipline
- Includes opportunities for parenting and other programmes for parents and families.

Parents' concerns with respect to removing CP from schools appear to be rooted in their strong conviction that without it schools will be chaotic and violence will increase. It is important that interventions address these concerns by demonstrating in a tangeable way that they are inaccurate.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR PHASE TWO ACTIVITIES WITH PARENTS

Parents' participation in Interventions

It would be most effective to work in target schools with supportive Head Teachers through the Regional Education Officers. As a first step, sessions to educate parents about the issue of CP and to solicit their input with respect to working toward eliminating CP in schools are necessary. Specifically, it would be appropriate to offer sessions to:

- Educate parents about the negative effects of CP on children and provide examples of best practices with respect to schools that have abolished CP in communities that resemble their own.
- Provide a place for parents to identify their concerns about what removing CP will mean for their children.
- Allow parents to identify interventions to help families in the transition.
- Involve parents in designing realistic, implementable interventions that take into account their concerns and incorporate suggestions for working with teachers and children
- Identify resources, partners and supports and develop a plan for implementation of activities with parents. For example, volunteer social workers and counselors in the community can be trained to support the schools.
- Articulate the conditions under which these activities will take place and assign responsibilities for particular tasks.
- Identify and establish mechanisms to define the situation with respect to student behaviour and performance and teachers' ability to manage the classroom and complete the syllabus pre- and post-intervention.
- Establish mechanisms to monitor and evaluate parents' ability to work with and support teachers and to modify and manage discipline in the home.
- Design tools to monitor activities and measure the programme's effectiveness
- Solicit parents' commitment to work on the initiatives as agreed.

SUMMARY OF ATTITUDES AND OPINIONS TOWARD CP - ADOLESCENTS

Fifty-three percent of children interviewed believe that class teachers have the right to administer CP and thirty-three percent believe that any teacher should have the right to administer CP. Fifteen percent said that no teacher should be able to administer CP. Those that believe teachers should be able to administer CP believe that without CP children would not listen and would repeat negative behaviour. They also said that CP improves pupil performance and say that some children come from bad homes and need the teachers to act as parent.

Those that do not believe that teachers have a right to administer CP state that CP is overused and often administered without an attempt to find out why the child has misbehaved or before other methods have been attempted. In addition they state that CP doesn't solve the problem. Many children stated "licks bun and cool. It doesn't teach them anything", meaning that there is no lasting lesson after the sting of the punishment.

Children also expressed the concern that CP increases the propensity for violence in children and the fear that parents or children might retaliate against teachers who administer CP

All children stated that they are unfairly punished by teachers who beat the entire class for one person's infraction, beat for minor infractions or beat innocent students because they didn't take time to discover the facts around the infraction.

Children who felt that teachers that are not their class teacher should have a right to administer CP felt that all teachers deserve respect and have the same authority so should be able to administer CP. Some children advocated for head prefects being allowed to administer CP.

Perceptions about the Impact of Removing CP from the Classroom

Children's opinions about removing CP from the classrooms conflicted when answering questions based on their actual experience in classrooms with CP as against their opinion when the questioned was phrased as a theoretical question.

When asked “What would happen if teachers were not able to beat children in school?” ninety-five percent stated that they believed that classrooms without CP would be chaotic, with unruly disruptive behaviour, increased violence and poor performance. They said that the education system would cease to function, students would be unable to learn and teachers wouldn’t come to school because the children would be too bad.

When asked whether they have ever been in a class where the teacher did not use CP thirty-eight percent said yes. Twenty-four percent said behaviour was better in classrooms without CP, eighteen percent said it was worse and fifty-eight percent said there was no difference in behaviour when the teacher used CP and when the teacher did not.

Children felt strongly that they are often punished unfairly. They felt that CP is justified if children commit serious infractions which they identify as stealing, lying cursing, fighting, not doing homework or disobeying or disrespecting the teacher. However they indicated that they are routinely punished for minor infractions such as making jokes, being late, making noise in class, climbing trees and sharpening their pencils too often. They also stated that teachers beat students for defending themselves against bullies or beats the whole class for one person’s infraction.

Attitudes and Experiences with Respect to CP

Children mainly reported negative feelings with respect to their experiences with CP. Eighty-six percent said they felt bad, hurt, and sad or humiliated when they were punished and empathized when their classmates were punished. Twelve percent said they didn’t feel anything one way or the other when they were physically punished and two percent said the felt good when they saw a classmate get punished if they didn’t like the person being punished or felt they deserved the punishment.

Eighty-one percent of children felt that teachers beat students for positive reasons such as in order to instill discipline, to discourage repeated behaviour and so that children can learn from their mistakes.

However, nineteen percent stated that teachers beat to take frustration or “spite” out on children. They also said that teachers beat because they are too lazy to take the time to talk to children or they didn’t know of any other way to solve the problem.

Perceptions about why Teachers use CP (Younger vs. Older and Male vs. Female)

Despite the fact that male teachers were considered more “strict”, children perceived that male teachers were less likely to resort to CP than female teachers. Fifty-seven percent of children stated that female teachers were more likely to beat than male teachers. Male teachers were perceived to use CP as a last resort, trying alternative methods of discipline and issuing warnings beforehand. Children stated that classes tend to take direction from male teachers more consistently than from female teachers, supporting the views of parents and teachers that males are perceived to have a natural authority.

On the other hand children felt that female teachers beat for “any little thing”. Children said that female teachers beat to establish authority (prove that they are not “soft”). Many felt that female teachers are more emotional and are affected by hormones associated with pregnancy and their monthly cycles. Children also perceived that female teachers take their personal stresses out on the class. Other comments included

- They take jokes personally
- They like to beat more
- Female teachers behave like mothers
- Some of them don’t have children so they don’t know how to treat children
- *Female teachers beat boys. Females seem to find pleasure in beating boys. They say they deserve it. Males get beaten more because male and female teachers beat them. Boys misbehave more in general*

Comments about younger teachers include:

- *Younger teachers have no patience*
- *Young teachers beat for the simplest thing and they beat the whole class.*
- *Younger teachers have whips in their hands more than the older ones*
- *The young teachers are almost the same age as the students so they don't have experience to share*
- *Younger teachers have more energy and take on more stress*
- *They don't know how to talk to children*

Comments about older teachers include:

- *Older teachers will talk to you to find out how things are at home and at school*
- *Older teachers share their experience to get you to see the right way*
- *Older teachers are patient, they would ask the reason. They speak to you instead of just picking up the whip.*
- *Older ones ask about your weekend, how were your other classes etc.*
- *Older teachers will be quiet and you get the message immediately. Younger ones come with an attitude.*

Children reported that younger teachers use CP more often and are more likely to resort to CP before trying other methods than older teachers. Fifty-two percent said that younger teachers beat more than older teachers while only thirty-five percent felt that older teachers beat more than younger teachers. Thirteen percent felt that there was no difference between older and younger teachers' propensity to use CP.

Children see younger teachers as more emotional, impulsive and impatient and older teachers as more patient and helpful to their students

Most children said they would rather have older teachers because they have more experience and they share their experience with their students. Many said that they learned better from older teachers

General comments about discipline

Teachers should be in closer contact with parents to find out what is happening at home and at school.

They should be expelled for three strikes. Parents should be called and then the parent can take over discipline. The responsibility should ultimately rest with parents

Showing an interest in the child and teaching them the right way makes them feel important and makes them want to help and to change.

*Tell the class the behaviour that is expected of them. Request their cooperation
Find out why they misbehaved and explain why that behaviour is wrong,*

Factors Influencing Children's Views on CP

Children were less clear about what might change their opinions and beliefs about CP than adult respondents. They often offered multiple responses; however, the most frequent responses with respect to questions about what factors would most influence their opinion on CP were as follows:

- If someone close to me was negatively impacted (86%)
- If a pastor, teacher, celebrity or other respected person spoke out against it (78%)
- If I saw research that said it had a negative impact on children and made them more likely to be violent (67%)

Comment by a student

“In my class the teacher doesn't beat and we behave because we know better. The class where the teacher beats is good when the teacher is there but they misbehave when she isn't there.”

Challenges and Opportunities

Challenges

The major challenge to changing children's attitudes and beliefs is breaking through the deeply ingrained belief that CP is "right". Children appear to believe in CP with even when personal negative experience and feelings of guilt and sadness after receiving CP exists and despite the fact that they perceive that it is often unfairly administered.

Opportunities

After participating in the discussion, many children reported that their views and beliefs about CP in the classroom had changed. Like parents they reported that they had never considered many of the issues before. Children appear to be eager to learn more about CP and likely to be eager to participate in interventions aimed at its removal from schools.

RECOMMENDATION FOR PHASE TWO ACTIVITIES WITH CHILDREN

Intervention

As a first step, sessions to educate children about the issue of CP and to solicit their input with respect to working toward eliminating CP in schools are necessary. Specifically, it would be appropriate to offer sessions to:

- Educate children about the negative effects of CP on children and provide examples of best practices in which children were involved with respect to schools that have abolished CP in communities that resemble their own. The education campaign must use methodologies that are fun and exciting for children including celebrity endorsements, videos, music etc.
- Involve children in identifying their concerns about what removing CP will mean for them.
- Involve children in designing realistic, implementable interventions that take into account their concerns and incorporate suggestions for working with teachers and children. Interventions must allow children a meaningful role in the process including student governments, participation on disciplinary committees etc.

- Identify resources, partners and supports and develop a plan for implementation of activities with children.
- Articulate the conditions under which these activities will take place and assign responsibilities for particular tasks.
- Identify and establish mechanisms to define the situation with respect to student behaviour and performance and teachers' ability to manage the classroom and complete the syllabus pre and post intervention.
- Establish mechanisms to monitor and evaluate the impact of students' involvement in activities on teachers' ability to modify and manage discipline in the home.
- Design tools to monitor activities and measure the programme's effectiveness.



TABLE ONE

Why is it acceptable for a Head Teacher to administer CP?

Because they have the authority to do so

CP is needed to curb behaviour

If children don't get licks they would do their own thing

Children need a couple lashes to make them do their work

Children are accustomed to lashes at home so don't respond to anything else

Lashes are most effective with most children`

Why is it acceptable for a class teacher to administer CP?

Teachers need to beat to have proper control of the classroom

If the teacher can't administer CP the students will think they don't have authority

A Teacher can't leave the entire class to take one child to the HM. It is too distracting to have to stop to send the child to the head or class teacher, the teacher has to interrupt the lesson and leave the other children to do this

Alternative methods are not acceptable because they do not work

Without it there would be disobedient students

Children need to be beaten when they misbehave

All teachers should be able to manage things the way they choose as long as it is under the general guidance of the school

Why is it acceptable for another teacher to administer CP?

Because teachers need to be able to work as a team to be effective

Because children should respect all teachers not just the head teacher or their class teacher

Long ago children were more respectful because any teacher could beat any child. Now children threaten to tell their parents if teachers beat them

The teacher is the authority so they should be able to beat any child.