



Caribbean Coalition for the Abolition of Corporal Punishment of Children
www.endcorporalpunishmentcaribbean.org

Newsletter Issue 2 – March 2014

About the CCACPC

The Caribbean Coalition for the Abolition of Corporal Punishment of Children (CCACPC), formed in 2013, aims to speed the prohibition and elimination of corporal punishment of children across the Caribbean. Hazel Thompson-Ahye, well known as a children's rights advocate across the region, is the part-time Coordinator for the Coalition, based in Port-of-Spain, Trinidad.

This newsletter provides an update on developments, action and progress in the region and gives information about how the CCACPC can support work for prohibition of corporal punishment. Please send questions and comments to hazel@endcorporalpunishmentcaribbean.org.

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1 DEVELOPMENTS

Bahamas: In June 2013, the Government responded to recommendations on corporal punishment received during the second Universal Periodic Review of its overall human rights record. It accepted a recommendation to "raise the age for criminal responsibility of boys and girls and eliminate corporal punishment against minors from the domestic legislation of the Bahamas" stating that the matter was under review, but rejected other recommendations to prohibit all corporal punishment. It said it would consider a recommendation to "take legal and educative measures in order to change the population's attitude to corporal punishment of children", stating: "While corporal punishment remains legalized, the Government is actively reviewing the merit of its domestic use; the Government, through the Department of Social Services and relevant NGOs promotes awareness of abuses of corporal punishment and encourages alternative methods of discipline." This represents positive progress since the first Universal Periodic Review of the Bahamas in 2008, when it defended the legality of corporal punishment, stating that "corporal punishment is a reasonable act of discipline." *For more information, see the CCACPC's state report on the [Bahamas](#).*

Barbados: The Government of Barbados also responded to recommendations on corporal punishment received during its second Universal Periodic Review of its overall human rights record in June 2013. It accepted a recommendation concerning changing traditional social attitudes that accept corporal punishment, but rejected recommendations to prohibit corporal punishment in all settings. *For more information, see the CCACPC's state report on [Barbados](#).*

Belize: In October 2013, the overall human rights situation in Belize was assessed during its Universal Periodic Review. During the review, the Government delegation drew attention to the prohibition of corporal punishment in schools brought about by the enactment of the Education and Training Act 2010 (the prohibition provision came into force in 2011). Among the many recommendations made by members of the working group was a recommendation to amend the Criminal Code to fully prohibit corporal punishment of children, including in the home. The Government has until March 2014 to respond, including to formally accept or reject the recommendation. *For more information, see the CCACPC's state report on [Belize](#).*

Bermuda: In October 2013, the [Coalition for the Protection of Children](#) called for prohibition of corporal punishment in schools in the context of the planned review, in 2014, of the Education Act 1996 and Education Rules 2006. *For more information, see the CCACPC's territory report on [Bermuda](#).*

Grenada: In October 2013, consultants from the Organisation of Eastern Caribbean States (OECS) reviewed Grenada's juvenile justice system, including the Juvenile Justice Act 2012, which explicitly prohibits corporal punishment as a sentence for crime but is not yet in force. The review is part of the OECS/USAID Juvenile Justice Reform Project with UNICEF and is being implemented under the Ministry of Social Development and Housing. *For more information, see the CCACPC's state report on [Grenada](#).*

Guyana: In November 2013, the [Society Against Sexual Orientation Discrimination](#) and the [Youth Coalition for Transformation](#) called for prohibition of corporal punishment in all settings during a Parliamentary Special Select Committee hearing. A new Education Bill and regulations under it are expected to be laid before the National Assembly in the current term; the national consultation on the draft Bill included the issue of school corporal punishment. *For more information, see the CCACPC's state report on [Guyana](#).*

Jamaica: In February 2014, Jamaica's Child Development Agency hosted a national consultation on policy to guide reform of the Child Care and Protection Act. At the consultation, the Children's Advocate, Ms Diahann Gordon-Harrison, the Children's Advocate, noted progress made on the issue and said that having regard to the incremental steps already taken, she was hopeful that Jamaica would arrive at total abolition. Hazel Thompson-Ahye, CCACPC Coordinator, took part in the consultation in person and through a written submission which urges the Government to use the revision of the Act to repeal the common law defence of "reasonable and moderate" punishment and to explicitly prohibit corporal punishment in the home and all settings. *For more information, see the CCACPC's state report on [Jamaica](#).*

Trinidad & Tobago: The Children Act 2012, which was assented to in August 2012 and is awaiting proclamation, would prohibit corporal punishment in all settings except the family home. CCACPC Coordinator Hazel Thompson-Ahye is calling for the Act to be brought into force and for corporal punishment to be explicitly prohibited in the family home. The Government has not yet pronounced publicly on the issue. Hazel Thompson-Ahye is a member of the new Government-appointed Child Protection Task Force, which was formed in December 2013, in the context of significant media attention to violence against children which included support for an end to corporal punishment. *For more information, see the CCACPC's state report on [Trinidad and Tobago](#).*

St Lucia: [RISE St Lucia](#) submitted an update to its shadow report to the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child, which recommends prohibition of corporal punishment. St Lucia will be examined by the Committee at its 66th session in May/June 2014. *For more information, see the CCACPC's state report on [St Lucia](#).*

US Virgin Islands: A bill which would prohibit corporal punishment in schools was passed by the Committee on Education and Workforce Development in February 2014. The bill would designate public schools as "Safe Havens", where corporal punishment will not be administered by anyone. *For more information, see the CCACPC's territory report on [US Virgin Islands](#).*

2 PROMOTING ACTION

National advocacy

The CCACPC's Coordinator is writing to governments of states and territories across the Caribbean to introduce the Coalition and call on them to work for prohibition. **We are keen to make contact with individuals and organisations with an interest in the issue in any Caribbean state or territory, and encourage national actors to advocate for prohibition, including raising the issue with their governments in follow up to the CCACPC's initial advocacy. For more information on CCACPC advocacy in your state or territory, email elinor@endcorporalpunishment.org.**

Using the international human rights system

The obligation to prohibit and eliminate all corporal punishment of children is well-established in international law (more information on the [CCACPC website](#)). Recommendations to states from UN treaty bodies and under the Universal Periodic Review add to the pressure on governments to work for prohibition. **The CCACPC is keen to support NGOs and national human rights institutions to contribute to the process and to use recommendations for advocacy. Contact elinor@endcorporalpunishment.org for more information.**

Committee on the Rights of the Child: The next Caribbean state to be examined is **St Lucia**, in May/June 2014. Further ahead, **Jamaica** and the **Dominican Republic** will be examined by the Committee in January 2015. For all three states, information should be submitted to the Committee as soon as possible. *See the CCACPC's state reports on [Dominican Republic](#), [Jamaica](#) and [St Lucia](#).*

Human Rights Committee: The Committee will be assessing **Haiti's** implementation of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights in October 2014; information should be submitted to the Committee in September (date to be confirmed). *See the CCACPC's state report on [Haiti](#).*

Universal Periodic Review: At the 21st session in Jan/Feb 2015, **Grenada** and **Guyana** will be reviewed on their overall human rights records; information should be submitted by 1 June 2014. **Jamaica** will be reviewed at the 22nd session in Apr/May 2015; information should be submitted by 1 September 2014. *See the CCACPC's state reports on [Grenada](#), [Guyana](#) and [Jamaica](#).*

How you can help the CCACPC

Promote support for prohibition: Encourage other organisations and individuals in your country or across the Caribbean to sign up to show their support of prohibition of all violent punishment of children on the [CCACPC's website](#).

Send us information: We welcome comments and updates on the information on our website and in our publications – including information on new or planned research, relevant legislation and current opportunities for reforming the law through new laws being drafted etc. Email elinor@endcorporalpunishment.org.

3 RESOURCES



The CCACPC [campaign leaflet](#) introduces the CCACPC and its Advisory Group, answers common questions about prohibition, gives information on progress towards prohibition and explains how organisations and individuals can support an end to corporal punishment in the Caribbean.

The first issue of the CCACPC [briefing](#) *Progress towards prohibiting all corporal punishment of children in the Caribbean* highlights the human rights imperative to prohibit all violent punishment of children in all Caribbean states and territories, summarises the progress made towards prohibition and what remains to be done in each Caribbean state and territory and emphasises the many immediate opportunities for working to fulfil children's right to protection in law from all corporal punishment.



The [Global Report 2013](#) of the [Global Initiative to End All Corporal Punishment of Children](#) reports on progress worldwide towards prohibiting all corporal punishment of children, documenting the progress and delays in achieving prohibition.

More publications are available on the CCACPC [website](#). Hard copies of most publications are available for advocacy purposes: email elinor@endcorporalpunishment.org.

The CCACPC [website](#) (www.endcorporalpunishmentcaribbean.org) contains details on the legality of corporal punishment and opportunities for law reform in all Caribbean states and territories, the human rights obligation to prohibit all corporal punishment and other aspects of the issue.



"We believe that the adoption of legislation to prohibit corporal punishment of children in all settings is a crucial step towards a compassionate, non-violent society... Through working with others and honouring children's human right to equal protection under the law, we can put our faith into action and make significant progress towards a less violent society."

[Statement](#) supporting legislation to end corporal punishment of children by prominent Christians in the Caribbean, 2012

Note: The CCACPC is supported by the [Global Initiative to End All Corporal Punishment of Children](#). This newsletter is being sent to all those across the region who have indicated their support for prohibition and elimination of all corporal punishment and others who we hope will be interested. To unsubscribe from future editions email info@endcorporalpunishment.org.