

**OUR POSITION**

Supporting the repeal of Section 59 reflects the Families Commission's concerns about levels of violence in the community and sends a message that children should be raised without violence.

**OUR GOAL**

Parents embrace positive parenting techniques and do not resort to violence when disciplining children.

**WHAT THE COMMISSION HAS DONE SO FAR**

2006: **Submission on the Crimes (Abolition of force as a justification for child discipline) Amendment Bill, supporting the repeal of section 59.**

2009: **Providing information, resources and media statements supporting the above legislation**

2009: **Discipline in Context: Families' disciplinary practices for children aged under five. Blue Skies Fund research.**

**Continued advocacy work to promote positive parenting.**

**COMMISSION'S VIEW**

- > Children are amongst the most vulnerable people in our society and need to be protected from violence.
- > Physical punishment of children can send a message to them that violence is the only way to resolve conflict.
- > Physical punishment can damage the parent-child relationship, harm future relationships and increase aggression and anti-social behaviour.
- > The level of violence in society is a concern and government agencies, community groups and people need to work together to change behaviours and attitudes over time.
- > Positive parenting strategies such as timeout and rewards are a more effective way to discipline children – smacking does not help children to understand and behave in the way that is expected of them.
- > We need to put the smacking debate behind us and concentrate on fostering safe, nurturing families that are free from violence.

**REFERENCES AND LINKS**

Families Commission:  
Child discipline

Office of the Children's Commissioner  
The Discipline and Guidance of Children: A research summary  
Children are Unbeatable: 7 very good reasons for not hitting children

Ministry of Social Development  
Family services

Community  
Barnardos  
Plunket

International  
End Corporal Punishment. Official website of the global campaign.  
Children are Unbeatable. United Kingdom site with useful parenting resources and information.

