



Stopping the Physical Punishment of Children & Young People

In June 2010, the Children & Young People Commissioner (CYPC) wrote to the ACT Attorney General, Mr Simon Corbell MLA, seeking discussions as to whether the ACT should become the first jurisdiction in Australia to stop the physical punishment of children.

To find out what the children and young people of Canberra thought about the issue, the CYPC distributed a survey to members of the CYPC's ACTkids eMail Network.

The CYPC also set up stalls at the Belconnen, Woden and Tuggeranong bus interchanges, as well as at a number of local youth services.

The CYPC received just over 300 responses to the survey, with the results showing that:

- 52% of children and young people said it was 'not ok' for parents to smack their children, 42% said it was 'sometimes ok', and 2% said it was 'ok'.
- of those children and young people who thought that it was 'ok' or 'sometimes ok' for parents to smack their children, most said that it was ok to smack a child to 'punish the child' (68%), to 'teach the child a lesson' (50%) or if the child was 'at risk of hurting themselves' (37%). Very few children and young people thought that it was ok to smack a child 'when the parents are

- angry' (5%), to 'make the parents feel better' (1%), or 'whenever the parents want to' (1%).
- 48% of children and young people thought that parents smacking their children 'maybe' should be banned, 21% said that it 'should' be banned, and 15% said that it 'shouldn't' be banned.

Children and young people also provided many interesting and insightful written comments about parents smacking their children.

In November 2010, the CYPC and the Institute of Child Protection Studies at the Australian Catholic University released a information sheet on the results of the survey, and the CYPC is currently working with the Australian National University to develop a discussion paper on a possible legislative model for the ACT which would prohibit the physical punishment of children and young people.

For further information, please phone the CYPC on 6205 2222, or email at ACTkids@act.gov.au.



ACT HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION
Australian Capital Territory

THE ACT CHILDREN & YOUNG PEOPLE COMMISSIONER IS ONE OF THREE COMMISSIONERS WITHIN THE ACT HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION

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