

## France Passes a Full Legal Ban on Corporal Punishment of Children

**FRANCE** becomes the 56th country to achieve the full (legal) prohibition of all forms of corporal punishment of children in all settings.

The long journey to prohibition culminates in the passing of the **Bill entitled “interdiction des violences éducatives ordinaires” approved by the Parliament on July 2nd which grants all children in France protection against this form of physical and emotional abuse.**

French activists, in particular the organisations STOP VEO (Stop au violence éducatives ordinaires) and OVEO (Observatoire de la Violence Éducative Ordinaire), with several other organisations including local civil society, professionals like pediatricians, child psychologists, persistently advocated for this legal change. This is a tremendous achievement. It has always been clear from the government’s declaration that the intention of the Bill was to ban all forms of corporal punishment (violences éducatives ordinaires) in all settings. Save the Children congratulates all organisations involved and France in becoming the 56th country to ban all forms of physical and humiliating punishment in all settings.

We understand that the Bill has been referred to the Constitutional Council, which has 15 days to confirm it or not. We are confident that the Bill will be confirmed.

Physical and humiliating punishment is a violation of children’s human rights to physical integrity, human dignity and equal protection under the law. The legality of physical and humiliating punishment of children is a highly symbolic reflection of their low status in society and implies a sense of ownership and control of the victim by the perpetrator. The prohibition of physical and humiliating punishment of children in law is a necessary first step towards ending the practice and sending a clear signal that violence against children is not acceptable. World leaders have promised to fulfil the right that children have to live free from all forms of violence— a cornerstone of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (UN CRC) and the Sustainable Development Goals, especially SDG target 16.2.

In 2011, UNICEF published the results of the largest cross-national attempt to measure the prevalence of corporal punishment. It found, from household surveys in 33 countries, that three in four children aged 2 – 14 were being subjected to some kind of violent discipline.

It is imperative that all countries that have committed to ban all corporal punishment in all settings will do so urgently. 2019 is a momentous year, the CRC turns 30. Children deserve equal protection from all forms of violence. Children cannot wait any longer.