

Kosovo Passes a Full Legal Ban on Corporal Punishment of Children

KOSOVO becomes the 55th country to achieve the full (legal) prohibition of all forms of corporal punishment of children in all settings.

The six year journey to prohibition culminates in the passing of the **Child Protection Law approved by the Parliament on June 27 which grants all children in Kosovo protection against this form of physical and emotional abuse.**

Save the Children with several other organisations including local civil society, and children and youth groups, persistently advocated for this legal change. This is a tremendous achievement. And as our colleague Melita Kabashi in Save the Children in Kosovo says “the real work begins now, making sure the law is implemented and all children are protected.” Along with awareness raising about the negative impact of practicing corporal punishment, SC in Kosovo and their local civil society partners are also working on behaviour change of adults through training on positive discipline in different communities.

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 some urgently. 2019 is a momentous year, the CRC turns 30. Children deserve equal protection from all forms of violence. Children cannot wait any longer.