



United Nations Secretary-General's Study  
on Violence against Children  
Adapted for Children and Young People

United Nations  
Secretary-General's Study  
on Violence against Children  
Adapted for Children  
and Young People

---

## CONTENT

<b>What is this Report about?</b> .....	3
<b>What does the Study say? The Main Recommendations</b> .....	12
<b>Where does violence against children take place?</b> .....	21
Home and Family.....	21
Schools and Educational Settings.....	25
Institutions.....	28
Workplace.....	35
Community.....	38
<b>What Next?</b> .....	43
<b>Word Bank</b> .....	46

---

## WHAT IS THIS REPORT ABOUT?

### WHAT IS THIS REPORT ABOUT?

This report tells you what happened in the United Nations *Secretary-General's*\* Study on Violence against Children. We will call it the Violence Study from here on. Hundreds of children and young people all over the world took part in *consultations* – meeting, events, *campaigns* and other ways to give their views on:

- what forms of violence are faced by children and young people around the world
- how violence affects children and young people
- what are the causes of violence against children and young people
- what needs to be done by governments to prevent all forms of violence against children and young people
- how best to help children and young people who have faced violence
- what children and young people can do to protect themselves from violence

#### The Violence Study – what happened?

In 2001, the *United Nations General Assembly* asked the *Secretary-General* of the United Nations (UN) for an official study on violence against children. This Study would look at the problem of violence against children across the world and would examine ideas on what could be done about it.

The Study is based on the idea that children have the right to be protected from violence. That right is in Article 19 of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, an international agreement which most countries in the world have signed and committed themselves to fulfil. You can read more about the Convention at: <http://www.unicef.org/magic/briefing/uncorc.html>

\* words in italics are explained in the Word Bank, see page 46.

Between March and July 2005, every region in the world held a *consultation*, a meeting where children, young people, adults and organisations could talk about violence against children in their region and what could be done about it. More information was collected through a questionnaire – 133 countries completed a survey that asked them to give details of any violence against children that had taken place in their country, and what they were doing to prevent and respond to violence against children.

Children and young people from across the world were involved in lots of ways throughout the Study process. All regions had separate meetings for children and young people so that they could share experiences and ideas about what could be done. Children and young people also helped other organisations to write reports about their ideas for stopping violence against children, and gave feedback on the draft report.

4

The Violence Study will help the United Nations (UN), governments, communities, parents, children, young people and organisations working with and for children to understand more about violence and what can be done to stop it.

This report is written for children and young people over the age of 12. In May 2006, a group of children and young people from all over the world met and discussed how to turn the official report into something that was easier to read. Young people in Serbia, Romania, India, Uganda and the Caribbean also looked at drafts of the report and gave comments to help make it better for children and young people to read.

The report you are now reading does not try to explain every word of the official report. It is shorter and gives you a broad overview of the most important points in the official report. *Difficult words* are explained in the Word Bank at the back of the report. The report talks

## WHAT IS THIS REPORT ABOUT?

about children even when referring to young people, because this is the way international agreements describe anyone under the age of eighteen.

In the following pages you can read about what the Study has found out about violence against children and how to stop it. It describes how children and young people themselves were involved in the Violence Study. There is also a chapter on what will happen now that the Violence Study has been published, and what governments and others should be doing.

After finishing this report, you could look at “Our Right to Be Protected from Violence: Activities for Learning and Taking Action for Children and Young People”, which can be found in this folder. This will give you ideas for things you can do to help other children and young people understand about violence against children and what can be done about it. It also has a list of more books, leaflets and websites on the Violence Study.

There is a separate book for younger children from 7 to 12 years old, called “Save Me and Save You – Violence is NOT ok”, produced by Save the Children, which you can find at [www.rb.se/eng](http://www.rb.se/eng). You can get the official report, “Report of the Independent *Expert* for the United Nations Study on Violence against Children”, and this version adapted for young people from the following addresses and websites:

5

### **UNICEF**

UNICEF House  
3 United Nations Plaza  
New York, New York 10017  
USA  
[www.unicef.org](http://www.unicef.org)

### **WHO**

World Health Organisation  
Avenue Appia 20  
1211 Geneva 27  
Switzerland  
[www.who.int](http://www.who.int)



**OHCHR**

Office of the United Nations  
High Commissioner for Human Rights  
UNOG-OHCHR  
1211 Geneva 10  
Switzerland  
[www.ohchr.org](http://www.ohchr.org)

**International Save the Children  
Alliance**

Second Floor  
Cambridge House  
100 Cambridge Grove  
London W6 0LE  
UK  
[www.savethechildren.net](http://www.savethechildren.net)

**Child Rights Information Network  
(CRIN)**

c/o Save the Children  
1 St John's Lane  
London EC1M 4AR  
UK  
[www.crin.org](http://www.crin.org)

## PROTECTING CHILDREN FROM VIOLENCE

### PROTECTING CHILDREN FROM VIOLENCE

The Violence Study is based on the following important ideas:

- Violence against children is never right.
- Children should not have less protection from violence than adults.
- All violence against children can be prevented.
- Governments have the main responsibility to uphold the rights of children to protection, and access to health, education and other services. They must also help families to provide their children with care in a safe environment.
- Governments have to make sure that anyone who commits violence against children is punished.
- Children are more at risk of violence because they have not fully grown up yet. Some children, because of their *gender*, race, ethnic origin, disability, or status in their community are particularly at risk.
- Children have the right to express their views, and to have those views taken into account when decisions are being made about what should be done to stop violence against children.

7

The Violence Study found that violence against children exists in every country in the world, whatever the culture, ethnic group or background they are from. And it doesn't matter whether their families are well-educated or not, rich or poor. Violence can take place anywhere. What's more, even though it is clear to most people that children have rights, and need to be protected from violence so that they can grow up to be healthy adults, many countries allow violence against children to take place because it is a custom, or because it is commonly used as a punishment.



The Violence Study is trying to put a stop to all that, by making clear *recommendations* about how to stop violence. It makes it clear that violence against children is never allowed, not even if it's seen as a tradition or as *discipline*. However, a study in itself couldn't stop violence – it is now up to governments and others to act on the *recommendations* made in the study.

**Every country can and must stop violence against children.**

## So what is violence?

Violence takes place when someone uses their strength or their position of power to hurt someone else on purpose, not by accident. Violence includes threats of violence, and acts which could possibly cause harm, as well as those that actually do. The harm involved can be to a person's mind and their general health and well-being, as well as to their body. Violence also includes deliberate harm people do to themselves, including killing themselves.

8

## Hidden, unreported violence

Governments have already agreed to protect children from all forms of violence. But children's own stories and *research* from many different sources show that governments are not doing enough, and that much violence is still not being reported. For example:

- The *World Health Organisation (WHO)* estimated that almost 53,000 children were murdered worldwide in 2002.
- A survey from a wide range of countries found that between 20 and 65 percent of school-aged children reported having been bullied, verbally or physically.
- *WHO* estimated that 150 million girls and 73 million boys under 18 were forced to have sex or experienced other forms of sexual violence during 2002.
- Between 100 and 140 million girls and women in the world underwent some form of

## PROTECTING CHILDREN FROM VIOLENCE

*female genital mutilation/cutting*. In Sub-Saharan Africa, Egypt and Sudan, 3 million girls and women are subjected to this practice every year.

- The *International Labour Organisation (ILO)* estimated that in 2004, 218 million children were involved in child labour, 126 million of whom were doing work that was dangerous. The *ILO* also estimated that 5.7 million children were forced to work (forced and *bonded labour*), that 1.8 million children worked in prostitution and pornography, and that 1.2 million children were victims of *trafficking*.

Violence against children takes many forms. There are many reasons why much violence remains hidden. For example:

- **fear** – many children are afraid to report violence. Or sometimes family members know about the violence, but don't report it because it is committed by someone powerful, like a parent, a police officer, a boss, or a community leader, who may harm them again.
- **stigma** – children may be afraid that if others know about the violence, they will be blamed or isolated. In some places when a girl is raped, some communities and perhaps even her own family blame the girl for bringing shame onto them.
- **'normal'** – sometimes violence is seen as a 'normal' way of dealing with things, for example, when people use violence as *discipline*, or in the form of *bullying* or sexual harassment.
- **not reported** – sometimes children and adults don't trust the authorities, or sometimes there are simply no authorities to go to when violence takes place.
- **not recorded** – even if violence is reported, often no record is kept, so that no one knows the extent of the problem. This is particularly the case in institutions such as jails and other *detention* centres, or *orphanages*.

## How does violence affect children?

Violence can have many effects on children, which can still be felt many years later. Effects may include:

- physical health problems, such as changes in the development of the brain, injuries, bruises and fractures.
- difficulties in dealing with other people.
- learning problems.
- finding it hard to express feelings in a way that other people can understand.
- emotional health problems including anxiety, depression, aggression or even wanting to kill him or herself.
- being more likely to do dangerous things like using drugs or having sex at a very young age.

10

Children are less likely to have long-term problems as a result of violence if they have a parent or other family member who makes them feel safe and loved, and if they have friends who can offer support and do not tempt them into doing criminal or dangerous things like taking drugs.

## Where does violence take place?

The Violence Study found that children experience violence in five different settings or places:

- at home
- in school or other educational settings
- in institutions such as *orphanages, children's homes*; in prisons or other *detention* centres
- in the workplace
- in the community

## PROTECTING CHILDREN FROM VIOLENCE

### What can be done about it?

There are things that help to reduce violence against children. In the home but also in other settings, children are less likely to experience violence if adults know how to be good parents, how to form a strong bond with their children and how to *discipline* them without using violence. Violence at school can be reduced by establishing clear rules for all staff and students that violence and *discrimination* are never allowed. And there is less violence in communities where all adults and children live together in a peaceful way without conflict and *discrimination*.

There are many examples of what could be done to stop all violence against children. But action is not taken everywhere, so these good examples are only helping a small number of children. Children still experience violence on a daily basis in many places. What is needed is continued support from all governments of all countries to work together to stop violence against children everywhere.

When action is taken to stop violence towards a particular child, decisions about how to respond should always take account of the best interests of the child involved. This means trying to stop the violence or deal with its effects, but not doing anything that might make the situation worse for the child.

Violence that takes place within the family is usually seen as something ‘private’, and outsiders don’t want to make a fuss or intervene in other people’s business. But the right of every child to respect, dignity and physical well-being doesn’t stop at the door of the family home. Governments are still responsible for making sure that children are protected at home as well as outside. On the following pages you will read more about what the Violence Study has done so far, and what the ideas are for future action.

## WHAT DOES THE STUDY SAY? THE MAIN RECOMMENDATIONS

These recommendations apply to **all** the places where violence against children takes place. There are also more ideas for what should be done to stop violence in the home and family; at school, in institutions, in the workplace and in the community.

The Violence Study contains important *recommendations* to encourage governments to do more to stop violence and to deal with the problems that it causes. The *recommendations* give advice about what governments and others should do, and about how everyone everywhere can get involved in stopping violence against children.

12

### 1. Governments should take stronger action on violence against children.

All governments should make sure everyone works together to stop violence against children. All those involved should know what they need to do to help stop violence against all children in each country. All governments should have a clearly written plan with actions to stop violence against children.

This needs to be built into the way that the country usually makes plans. Every government should find a way to make sure that the national plan is carried out, and that it makes a real difference.

Governments should check that their plans are in line with *international laws* and agreements that help protect children (see Recommendation 12 below).

## WHAT DOES THE STUDY SAY?

The plans should make it clear how progress is going to be checked, how long it should take, and how much it will cost.

### 2. Governments should ban all violence against children.

Every government should make very clear that all forms of violence against children are never allowed. All governments should have written laws to ban violence against children. This includes forbidding *physical punishment*, harmful traditional customs such as *early or forced marriages*, *female genital mutilation*, so-called *honour killings*, and sexual violence. They should also make sure that such laws are obeyed.

The *Committee on the Rights of the Child* has published a special report (*General Comment No. 8*) to say that all *physical punishment* of children should be forbidden by law. It is important that all governments pay attention to this.

Governments should also make sure that no one aged under 18 receives the *death penalty* or life *imprisonment* with no possibility of release.

13

### 3. Governments should pay more attention to *preventing* violence against children.

A big change is needed so that money is spent on work that stops violence occurring in the first place by tackling the causes of it. It is important that governments don't only try to do something about violence against children after it has happened. They must also take action to prevent it from occurring in the first place.

Projects have to look at why violence is taking place and try to do something about these situations. For example, there should be support for children who are separated from their parents or other family members, and for those who live in families where someone is using alcohol or drugs. There should also be work to help children who live in poverty. There should be work to overcome unequal power between men and women, boys and girls, that results in violence. It is also important to make sure that there are no dangerous weapons such as guns at home or in the community.

#### 4. Governments should give out clear messages that violence against children is never allowed, and that everyone should learn about non-violent ways of dealing with each other.

Governments should be working to change beliefs or traditions that make it normal or easy to use violence against children. It is important that leaders in countries give out clear messages that violence against children is never allowed. Governments have to make sure that everyone, including children, understands about *children's rights*.

14

Governments should make sure that everyone knows how to resolve problems in a non-violent way, and how to protect children when violence occurs – including children, parents, and people who work with children. In the same way that physical violence against adults is not allowed, it should never be allowed for children, either. Governments should set up *campaigns* to make clear that *physical punishment* is unacceptable, and to educate everyone about non-violent ways of dealing with each other, particularly about non-violent ways of dealing with children. Everyone must learn about the harm that violence and witnessing violence can do to children. Adults should learn how to *discipline* children without using violence. It is also important to challenge ideas about 'proper' behaviour for girls and boys when these beliefs make people think that violence is OK. This includes working to stop harmful traditional practices, for example *early or forced marriage* for girls.

## WHAT DOES THE STUDY SAY?

Governments should also talk to the media (such as newspapers, TV, radio) to promote non-violent ways of people dealing with each other. The media should also be told to how to protect children more in what they write or display, and show them, for example by not printing photographs of girls that present them in a sexual manner, and by not making known exactly who the child is when they are reporting stories about violence against children.

### 5. People who work with children should learn how to stop all violence against children.

Everyone who works with or cares for children should know how they can help to stop violence against them. This includes teachers, child-care workers, health and social workers, police, people who work in *orphanages*, in prisons or other *detention* facilities, community leaders, religious leaders and the media.

Everyone should learn about *children's rights* and how to prevent violence against children. There should be written codes of conduct (guidelines) for anyone who works with children to make clear that violence against them is never acceptable, and what workers should do and what they are not allowed to do. Learning about violence against children should be part of people's jobs. The training should be repeated while they have jobs that involve working with children.

15

### 6. Governments should help and support children who have been victims of violence.

Governments have to find better ways to help and support children who have experienced violence. Teachers, health and social workers should be able to help such children, especially



in an emergency. If children have to go to court, they should also get *child-friendly* legal assistance – that is, help from lawyers and solicitors who they can understand. Education, health, social services and legal systems should be planned to meet the special needs of children.

## 7. Children should be able to express their views.

There is a special section called Article 12 in the *UN Convention on the Rights of the Child* which says that children have the right to say what they think should happen when adults are making decisions that affect them; their opinions should be taken into account.

All governments should make special efforts to actively listen to children, and respect their views when thinking about ways to prevent and deal with violence. Children have an important role to play and governments and others should make sure that they are involved. Children's organisations and child-led projects to address violence that are guided by the best interests of children should be supported and encouraged.

16

## 8. Governments should make it easy for anyone to report violence against children.

Governments have to make it easy to report violence against children. Children and adults should know how they can report violence, and that what happens after will really help the child and not do him or her further harm. They should feel safe, and that they will not be punished for reporting the violence. This includes children in institutions such as *orphanages*, prison or *detention* centres – who should be able to safely report violence they have experienced to people outside the institution where they live.

## WHAT DOES THE STUDY SAY?

Violence can be reported by the children themselves, but also by the parents or people who care for children, people who work in schools, doctors, hospitals, social workers, *children's rights* organisations, or people who work in police stations or in prisons.

Each country should have a telephone helpline where children or adults can report violence. The telephone helpline can be used to talk to someone who is sympathetic, who knows about the subject, so that they can get support and advice. Governments should also look into ways to use the Internet to help children and adults to report violence.

### 9. Governments should make sure that anyone who is violent against children is punished.

Governments should make sure that people who are violent against children are always punished. Children and their communities need to be able to trust the police and the courts before they can take violence against children seriously. People need to know that there are laws, and that these laws will be used to punish them if they do the wrong thing. When someone has been found guilty of violence (including physical and sexual violence) against children, they should not be allowed to work with children again.

17

### 10. Governments should address the different ways in which violence takes place to girls and to boys.

The risk of violence is different for girls and boys, linked to the different ways in which they are brought up, and to the *inequality* between them. Governments should let everyone know about the *human rights* of women and girls, and make sure that every woman and girl has these rights, the same as men and boys have. As part of their plan to stop violence against

children, governments should work to make the situation of boys and girls more equal, and to make it clear that violence of any kind is unacceptable.

More girls suffer from sexual violence, violence from their boyfriends or husbands, and in some regions, from harmful traditional customs or *neglect* because they are girls. More boys suffer from severe *physical punishment*, violence from other young people, or gang violence.

## 11. Governments should collect information and do *research* about violence against children.

Governments should make sure that information is collected about violence against children. Information of all kinds is important to understand what is really taking place, and to find good solutions to prevent and respond to violence.

18

Each country should make sure there is a national *monitoring* system – a way of measuring how much violence against children there is in a country. Information should be published regularly so that people can see whether progress is being made in stopping violence against children.

It is also important that all children should be registered at birth. If they are not, it is hard for a government to know they exist, or to protect them from violence (such as being taken abroad to work, or *forced into an early marriage*). Governments should also keep information on children without parents to care for them, and on those in *detention*. It is important to find out about things like *gender*, age, where the children live, their education and what ethnic group they belong to. This is so that governments can see whether some children are more at risk from violence than others.

## WHAT DOES THE STUDY SAY?

Governments should keep a list of the cases of violence that have been reported. They should also carry out surveys (big *research* studies) where people such as parents and the children themselves are asked about whether they have suffered from violence. There should be *research* to look at all the settings (home and family, schools, workplace, institutions, and communities), which should include interviews with both children and parents. *Research* should also make sure that it looks closely at the groups of girls and boys most at risk of violence.

### 12. Governments should make sure that they really do take action when they sign international agreements about stopping violence against children.

The *UN Convention on the Rights of the Child* sets out important rules to protect children from violence. There are also other international *conventions* that say that violence against children should end. Most governments have ratified these *conventions* – this means that they have agreed to fulfil the rights that are set out in the *UN Convention on the Rights of the Child* – and those that have not should do so now.

19

The laws of countries should be in line with these *conventions* to make sure that there is the greatest protection written into the law. And all governments should put what they say into practice within their country.

Governments should also ratify the *Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment*. *Experts* could then regularly visit prisons and *detention* centres where children are held, to make sure that they are protected from violence there.

The *UN Convention on the Rights of the Child* is one example of an international agreement. There are also others about specific issues, and the Violence Study recommends that governments put into practice what these agreements say to protect children. Other international *conventions* that help protect children from violence include:

- *Convention on Elimination of All Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW)*, which protects women and girls from unfair treatment and violence.
- Two special *international laws (International Labour Organisation [ILO] Conventions 138 and 182)* help protect working children by making it illegal for children to work under the age of 18, and to work in particularly dangerous conditions.
- The UN Convention against Transnational *Organised Crime* and its *Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, especially Women and Children*, protects children from being taken away from their families to be used for low-paid work, prostitution or to be *forced into marriage*.
- The *Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court* ensures that everyone who is violent against children can be punished, even if they commit the crime outside their own country.

20

For more information about these *conventions*, go to the Word Bank.

To make sure that governments are really turning these agreements into laws and actions within their own countries, they should work directly with *Treaty Monitoring Bodies*. These organisations aid governments in following the rules set out in the *conventions*, and also help them to develop the specific laws that help to protect children from violence. Governments should tell the *Treaty Monitoring Bodies* about their laws so that they can help the governments make progress on protecting children from violence.

The next section gives more details about each of the five settings discussed in the Violence Study – the home and family, schools, institutions, the workplace and the community.

## HOME AND FAMILY

### WHERE DOES VIOLENCE AGAINST CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE TAKE PLACE?

#### HOME AND FAMILY

Home should be a place where everyone feels safe and respected, not a place of fear.

The *UN Convention on the Rights of the Child* says that governments should make sure that children are properly cared for and protected from violence, *abuse* and *neglect* committed by their parents or by anyone else who looks after them.

The family is the natural place for everyone, but especially children, to develop and to feel safe and protected. But for many children across the world their home is not a safe place at all. Violence in the family is often hidden. Even when children try to speak out about violence, adults may deny that it happened.

21

“With these two hands my mother holds me, cares for me – this I love ...  
With these two hands my mother hits me – this I hate.”

Young girl, East Asia

#### What kinds of violence take place in the home and family?

- **Violence against very young children** – This can cause long-term health problems and even death. For example, shaking a baby can lead to brain injury or death.
- **Physical violence** – Most physical violence against children does not lead to death or long-term injury. It is often used to try to make children behave. Harsh treatment and punishment takes place all over the world. But children say they would rather

be *disciplined* without physical or humiliating punishment. Only 16 countries in the world have laws that ban physical punishment of children at home.

- **Emotional violence** – Often families use emotional violence as well as physical violence to punish children. Insults, name-calling, threats, isolating or rejecting a child, are all forms of violence.
- **Neglect** – This means that families do not make sure that children have everything they need to grow up safely and healthily, and do not protect them from dangers. Girls and disabled children are most at risk of neglect.
- **Sexual violence** – Children are forced to have sex, harassed or touched in ways that make them feel uncomfortable, mostly by men and boys in their families. Girls and boys are sexually *abused* in the home, usually by a male family member. Between one percent and 21 percent of girls has been sexually *abused* by the time she reaches the age of 15.
- **Early marriage** – 82 million girls across the world get married before they reach the age of 18. Many are much younger, and are forced to marry older men. They may then face violence, including forced sex.
- **Harmful traditional customs** – some traditional customs involve violence against children, for example:
  - *female genital mutilation* (cutting girls' sexual parts): worldwide, between 100 and 140 million girls and women have undergone *female genital mutilation*.
  - scarring, branding, burning and other painful ways of decorating the body.
  - violent initiation rites: making boys or girls do violent things, or doing violence to them, before they are accepted as adults
  - *honour killings*, where men kill girls in the name of family 'honour', for example, for having sex outside marriage, or refusing an arranged marriage.
  - some children are accused of 'witchcraft', and are no longer cared for or even *abused* or killed; others are used as victims in 'witchcraft' practices.

## HOME AND FAMILY

- **Witnessing domestic violence** – Between 133 and 275 million children across the world witness domestic violence in their homes, usually violence between parents. Such violence can have an effect on how children feel, how they develop and how they deal with other people throughout their lives. Where there is violence against women in a family, also there is often violence against the children.

Parents, step-parents, foster parents, brothers and sisters, relatives and others taking care of children can be responsible for violence towards children in the home.

### Who experiences violence in the home?

Violence can take place to any child, rich or poor, from any ethnic group, at any age. *Physical punishment* is common throughout the world. Babies and toddlers as well as older children may be hit by their parents or other people who care for them.

Girls are more likely to suffer from sexual violence, although it can happen to boys as well. And girls are more often hurt by harmful customs. In some parts of the world, fewer girls than boys survive due to greater *neglect* as well as violence. Disabled children are also more likely to experience violence, including being abandoned.

Violence often takes place because parents think that *physical punishment* is necessary for educating and raising their child, or because they do not know about other options.



## What needs to be done?

Parents should always have the main responsibility for bringing up their children, and governments should help them to do this by:

- making sure that parents and other people who care for children are supported. There needs to be good health care and education, as well as jobs for adults so that they have enough money for their families. Parents should be able to get advice, support and information on how to help their children develop well from a young age. There should be regular home visits and checks by doctors or other medical staff of newborn babies.
- giving extra help to families who are having particular difficulties. For example, there should be support for families where there is no father or mother, families from ethnic minorities or those facing *discrimination*, or families who have to care for children with disabilities.
- making sure that families receive support, advice and information to help them provide violence-free homes. Parents (mothers and fathers) should have access to education on positive ways of dealing with conflict and *discipline*, and on the equal rights of boys and girls. They also need to learn more about how children develop, and how important it is to respect their views as they grow up.

## SCHOOLS AND EDUCATIONAL SETTINGS

### WHERE DOES VIOLENCE AGAINST CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE TAKE PLACE? SCHOOLS AND EDUCATIONAL SETTINGS

Schools should be safe, *child-friendly* places: all children have a right to a non-violent education.

Article 28 of the *UN Convention on the Rights of the Child* says that all children have a right to education, and that *discipline* in schools should respect children's human dignity. A school that is not safe is not a good place to learn.

In most countries, children spend more time in schools than anywhere else outside of their homes. Schools have an important role to play in protecting children from violence.

But in many countries, *physical punishment* is a routine part of school life. Teachers can be cruel, humiliate children, physically *abuse* them or even use sexual violence. Teachers do so because they think it makes pupils work better or because they want to show their power. Violent *discipline* teaches children to fear, but it doesn't teach them to use their own initiative. It teaches them that violence is a good way to solve conflicts, but it doesn't teach them values like tolerance and justice. It can also make them feel bad about themselves.

*Bullying* between children may not be seen as a serious problem. Many countries have no laws to protect schoolchildren and students from *discrimination*.

## What kinds of violence take place in schools?

- **Physical violence from teachers** – teachers may beat children as punishment, for example when they have not done their work properly. 106 countries in the world have not banned *physical punishment* in schools.
- Cruel treatment and humiliation by teachers – teachers shout at students or call them names.
- **Bullying: physical and mental violence from other students** – there may be school ground fights or bullying by other students. Bullying is most often verbal – name-calling or insulting – but physical violence can also occur. In studies from around the world, between 20 percent and 60 percent of children reported that they had been bullied at school in the past month.
- **Sexual and gender violence** – girls may be harassed verbally, *abused* or raped at school or on their way there by male teachers and/or classmates. Also there is often violence towards young people who are gay, lesbian, bisexual or transgender.

26

## Who is likely to experience violence in schools?

Violence in schools can occur at any age. Even young children may be hit or experience other forms of violence, either from teachers or from other children.

Boys report a lot of physical violence and also talk about being humiliated and treated cruelly by teachers. Girls have the same problems but are also more at risk of sexual harassment, *abuse* and rape by teachers or male students. The fear of such treatment means that many girls stay out of school.

*Bullying* and name-calling are problems that affect boys and girls across the world. Children may be especially at risk of violence in school if they have a disability, are from a different ethnic or religious group, are gay or lesbian, or because of how they look.

## SCHOOLS AND EDUCATIONAL SETTINGS

### What needs to be done?

Schools should be places where children are able to learn free from violence. Schools should be safe and *child-friendly*. Children should learn about their *rights*. Schools should be places where children learn that violence is never allowed, and that they can lead their lives in non-violent ways. This means that governments should:

- make sure that schools have a code of conduct (set of rules) for staff and students, banning violence and showing how to behave in a non-violent way. Schools should make it clear that no form of *discrimination* will be allowed, including treating girls or boys less well because of their *gender*.
- make sure that good training programmes are provided to show teachers, other staff and parents how to teach or *discipline* without being violent, threatening or humiliating children.
- make sure that schools build the knowledge, attitudes and skills that children need to lead non-violent lives and to deal with any violence that they might experience. Schools should have anti-bullying policies, and promote respect for everyone in the school.
- make sure that schools teach children about *child rights* and the *UN Convention on the Rights of the Child*. The way teaching is done should in no way encourage anyone to be violent.

## WHERE DOES VIOLENCE AGAINST CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE TAKE PLACE?

### INSTITUTIONS

The Violence Study looks at violence against children who live away from their homes and who are without their families. This can be either because their families are longer able to care for them or because they have been in trouble with the law. In this chapter, we will first look at what happens to children whose families cannot look after them.

### ORPHANAGES, CHILDREN'S HOMES AND OTHER INSTITUTIONS.

28

Institutions are places where a group of children live together and are looked after by adults who are not part of their real family. *Orphanages* or *children's homes* are types of institutions.

An institution is the last place that a child should have to grow up in. Children should only be put into institutions if there is no other way of caring for them. When children do have to go into institutions they must be safe and protective places.

Article 19 of the *UN Convention on the Rights of the Child* says that children should be well protected by anyone who looks after them, and that they should not be exposed to violence. Article 20 says that children who cannot be looked after by their own family must be looked after properly by people who respect the religion, culture and language of the child or children.

## INSTITUTIONS

There are about 8 million children around the world who live away from their families in *orphanages* and other *children's homes*.

Some children are placed in institutions because they have no parents to look after them. But many children in '*orphanages*' actually do have parents. They are sent there because their family is too poor or is facing difficulties. It can also be because there has been violence or *sexual abuse* in the family. If there is no alternative carer available and the children cannot stay in their own community, then an institution is often the only place where they can go.

There are also children who are put into institutions because they face *discrimination*, for example, young people who have a disability. There are even cases of children from *minority* groups being put into *children's homes* to purposely take them away from their own culture and religion.

Children who live away from home may face violence from staff and from other children. Institutions can be violent places, but 80 percent of cases of violence are never reported by the children themselves.

29

What kinds of violence take place in institutions that are supposed to care for children?

- **Violence by staff** – used to *discipline* children – this can include beating them, hitting their heads against the wall, tying them up, locking them up, or leaving them to lie for days without changing their clothes. There can also be sexual violence from staff. In 147 countries across the world, there is no law preventing the adults who work in institutions from using *physical punishment* against the children living there.

- **Violence as ‘treatment’** – some violence against children is called ‘treatment’, for example, when patients are given electric shocks in the hope that it will cure their mental illness in psychiatric institutions.
- **Neglect** – sometimes children are not given the care they need. The risk of neglect is greatest for children with disabilities. In many institutions for disabled children, no education or play is provided. Nothing is done to help the children develop. They are often left to lie in bed for long periods, with no contact with other people. This can lead to long-term health and emotional problems.
- **Violence from other children in the institutions** – this may be physical, but could also be name-calling, or other humiliating acts.

### Who is likely to experience violence in institutions like *orphanages*?

Many children who live in institutions are at risk of violence. Sometimes staff in institutions allow such violence to take place because there are too many children and not enough trained staff, or not enough money for the institutions to do things properly. Violence can also occur because staff haven’t been trained well in how to stop it, and they may not have time or the skills necessary to improve the situation. The risk of violence is also greater if there is no system to check that the adults are looking after the children properly. Children with disabilities are more likely to be *neglected* in institutions.

## INSTITUTIONS

### JUSTICE SYSTEMS, PRISON AND DETENTION CENTRES

Putting children into jail or *detention* are the last places they should be. Children *in trouble with the law* should only be put in special children's facilities where people who work there can make sure that they are protected from violence.

Article 37 of the *UN Convention on the Rights of the Child* says that children who break the law should not be treated cruelly, that they should not be put in prison with adults, and that they should be able to see their families. Article 40 adds that prison sentences for children should only be used for the most serious offences.

But it is quite common for children who have broken the law to be locked up, even though most of them are put in prison for minor offences, and things that should not really be a crime at all – e.g. being homeless and living on the street. Worldwide, 1 million children are deprived of their liberty. In many countries, children are put into the same prisons as adults, and sometimes in the same area or cell. Some countries still use the death sentence against children under 18.

31

*Detention* is keeping a child locked up against his or her will as punishment. This can be in a prison, a young offenders' institute, or a children's home.

Children in prisons or in other forms of *detention* face harsh conditions, and frequently face *abuse* from staff and from other prisoners. Often children learn to be more violent when they are in prison or in *detention*. Some also harm or kill themselves.

“Sometimes one day in prison felt like a year.  
But after ten days you get used to it and don't cry so much.”

Boy, Middle East



## What kinds of violence take place to children who are in trouble with the law?

- **Physical punishment** – In some countries, children who have committed a crime can face *physical punishment* such as being caned or whipped. 31 countries still allow corporal punishment as a legal sentence for children. In some countries they may even be sentenced to death.
- **Violence from staff** – Children who are in prisons or in other forms of *detention* are at risk of violence from staff working in prisons, *detention* centres, or from the police or security forces. For example, sometimes children and young people are beaten, put in isolation away from other children and young people, ignored when they need help, or are not allowed to eat as punishment. Girls are particularly at risk of being sexually abused, especially when they are supervised by male staff.
- **Violence from other young people or adults** – Those who share the prison, *detention* centre or cell with young people can also be physically, verbally, or sexually violent.

32

## Who is likely to experience violence in *detention* centres?

Boys are much more likely to be put into prison or in *detention* centres than girls. Many children in prison or in *detention* are in danger of violence. But it is more likely to occur if the child is disabled or from a *minority group*. Those who are younger or weaker are more likely to suffer violence from others in prison or in *detention*.

## What needs to be done?

Governments are responsible for the safety of children who live in institutions or who are held in *detention*, and they must make sure that, whether they are *detention* centres or

## INSTITUTIONS

*orphanages*, the people they employ to operate all these institutions protect children from violence. Governments should:

- make sure that children are not put into institutions in the first place. Governments should find better ways to deal with children who get into trouble with the law, or who don't live with their parents. There needs to be more support for families and communities to keep children in family-based care (such as *foster care*). Babies and very young children should never be put into an institution of any kind.
- make sure that whenever possible, children in institutions should go back to their families. When this happens, children and their families should be given support and advice, and trained social workers should be available to help these families. Children from *minority* groups, including *indigenous* children, are particularly at risk and families need support services that respect their culture.
- change the law, so that some offences are no longer crimes. Sometimes, some things are said to be crimes, just because they are committed by children. In other cases, children are punished for things they have to do to survive, or even when they are actually victims or have been forced to do something illegal by adults. Examples are:
  - *truancy* – not going to school
  - running away from home
  - being 'out of control' – not behaving in the way parents or other adults want them to
  - begging
  - selling sex
  - *scavenging* – looking for things that can be sold on rubbish tips or on the street
  - *loitering* – hanging around
  - *vagrancy* – not having a home to go to, living on the streets
  - being trafficked; and
  - being forced by an adult to commit a crime.

- make sure that children are only put in *detention* when they are posing a real danger to others. Systems to deal with children who are *in trouble with the law* should be *child-friendly*, and separate from those for adults. They should enable children to make up in various ways for what they have done wrong, and should provide alternatives to *detention*.
- make sure that, when children are placed in institutions or *detention* centres, there should be regular meetings to see if they are still the best place for them or whether there is a better option, such as going back to their family or community.
- make sure that children know where they can safely report *abuses* without being punished, threatened or *abused*.
- make sure that children in institutions and *detention* centres know what their rights are, and are able to report any *abuse* of their rights without fear.
- make sure that institutions like *detention* centres are checked regularly so that children are well treated and that staff are trained to look after children properly, without using violence. People who check institutions and *detention* centres should be independent – that is, not connected to the staff at the institution, and they should be allowed to make surprise visits, investigate any reports of violence, and talk to children and staff in private.
- sign up to the *Optional Protocol for the Convention Against Torture* – an international agreement which says that no one should be tortured when in prison. This agreement also helps to set up a system of independent visits to make sure children and other prisoners are well treated when in detention.

## WORKPLACE

### WHERE DOES VIOLENCE AGAINST CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE TAKE PLACE?

#### WORKPLACE

Whether children work legally or illegally, the places that they work in should be safe, healthy and free from violence.

The *UN Convention on the Rights of the Child* says in Article 32 that governments should protect children from work that is dangerous, or that might harm their health or stop them from getting a proper education. Many children work long hours because they have to. Without work they might not have enough money for food and a place to sleep. Sometimes their parents, or other adults, force them to do so.

The places where children work include fields, factories, mines, streets, markets, shops, bars, brothels, transport, and private homes. Many children have to work in environments that are unhealthy and dangerous. Many children are forced to do work that is illegal, sometimes as child prostitutes or for pornography. The most common type of work for girls under 16 is domestic work (doing housework in somebody else's house), where they have no protection as employees. Child domestic workers are often treated very badly, paid poorly or not at all, or even used as slaves.

Although the number of working children has gone down over the past few years, there are still many children who have to work. The *International Labour Organisation (ILO)* estimated that in 2004, 218 million children were involved in child labour, of whom 126 million were doing work that was dangerous. 5.7 million children were forced to work (forced and *bonded labour*), 1.8 million children worked in prostitution and pornography, and 1.2 million children were victims of *trafficking*.

Children who work can be treated violently or *abused* by people who give them work – their supervisors or employers – but also by co-workers, clients, police, and criminal gangs.

Two special *international laws* (*International Labour Organisation [ILO] Conventions 138 and 182*) help to protect working children, but no law protects children from violence in the workplace.

### What kinds of violence take place to working children?

- **Violence by employers, other staff and clients** – violence is often used to force children to work, to punish them, or to control them in the workplace.
- **Prostitution and child pornography** – more than 1 million children are used in prostitution every year. Many are forced to do so. Often there is no one to go to for help. Even if they do find help, they may be treated as criminals, locked up, or not allowed to take their employers to court.
- **Bonded labour or slavery** – children may be forced to work to help repay a debt or loan, or they may be sold as slaves. Children in such positions are not able to protect themselves from their bosses and other workers. Almost all employers use violence to force children to do the work.

### Who experiences violence while working?

Many young workers live in poverty and work to help support their families. Others are homeless and must find ways to make a living. Child workers are more likely to be bullied and harassed just because they are children, and would find it hard to resist or complain.

## WORKPLACE

### What needs to be done?

Children who are under the legal working age set by the government should not be in the workplace. All children should be protected from violence in the workplace. Governments should:

- ban the worst forms of work that children do. Governments should pay attention to children working informally, for example on farms, in street stalls or on the street, or in private homes. Governments should make sure that child workers have a say in how to solve the problem. Plans for the development of countries should include ways of making sure that children do not need to work illegally in the future.
- make sure there are laws to protect children from violence at work, whether they are working legally or illegally, and make sure everyone obeys these laws.
- make sure that everyone who employs children on a legal basis knows how to treat them without using violence. There should be training programmes for employers to help them make the workplace a non-violent, safe space for children. There should also be clear systems for people to report or complain about violence against children in the workplace.
- make sure that there is help available for children who work illegally to leave the situation, receive education and training, and find a better way to live. They should not be punished any further.
- along with businesses, trade unions and community organisations, work together to protect working children. There should be clear guidelines (rules) to help workplaces avoid violence against working children.

## WHERE DOES VIOLENCE AGAINST CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE TAKE PLACE?

### COMMUNITY

Children should be able to enjoy their community without fear of violence.

A community can be the village, the neighbourhood, the street, or a group. A community can be many other people living closely together in crowded places, or there may be only a few people living in a big area.

The community should be a place where children feel protected and supported. But children can also face many risks of violence when they are away from the protection of their families or other adults who care for them. Such risks include injuries, sexual violence, and kidnapping. Where a lot of violence occurs in the community, children are among the most vulnerable. Adults in the community may know they can get away with violence and *sexual abuse*, and take advantage of the lack of protection for children in the community.

38

### What kinds of violence take place in community?

- **Violence between children themselves** – this takes place more often in communities where there is unemployment, poor housing, and fewer opportunities. When children have nothing to look forward to, they may sometimes show frustration and anger by behaving in a violent way. Misuse of drugs and alcohol make this behaviour worse. Boys and young men may be encouraged towards violence because they are often told that this is part of what it is to be a man – but really, men do not have to be violent. Violence between children themselves can be fatal and may lead to death.

## COMMUNITY

- **Sexual violence in the community** – This can be harassment, inappropriate touching, or being forced to have sex with someone, sometimes for money. Sexual violence is usually committed by someone known or trusted by the child – not by strangers – for example, sports coaches, religious leaders, police, teachers, or employers.
- **Violence from boyfriends or girlfriends** – many young people say that they have been hit, slapped or hurt on purpose by a boyfriend or girlfriend.
- **Violence against *street children*** – street children often have no one to protect them, and can be seen as a problem by the communities they live in. The police get involved and try to remove the children from the street. Children suffer beatings, sexual violence and *torture*, or may ‘disappear’.
- **Sex tourism** – Some children work in places where tourists want to have sex with children.
- **Violence in camps for *refugees and displaced people*** – Children may live in such camps without their parents. But even with their parents, camps can be dangerous places to grow up in. This is because such camps are often seen as temporary places to live for people who have no legal right to be in the country. Often there is no police or anyone else who makes sure that action is taken against violence. This makes it especially dangerous for women and girls.
- **Trafficking and kidnapping** – Children are taken away from their families to be used for low-paid work, prostitution, or to be *forced into a marriage* against their will. Physical, emotional and sexual violence is used to make sure that the children do as they are told.
- **Violence through the media and the Internet** – Children see all types of violence on television, films, video games and the Internet, which is often presented as normal or even fun. Children may be used for pornography or lured away from home by people who pose as friends in chatrooms on the Internet. Children may themselves use mobile phones or e-mails to threaten, humiliate or *bully* other children.



## Who experiences violence in the community?

Girls are more likely to suffer sexual violence, although this can happen to boys as well. But girls are more often hurt by harmful customs. Teenage boys may experience more physical violence in the community than girls, and are particularly at risk of violence due to guns and weapons. In most parts of the world, boys aged 15 to 17 are at three times greater risk of being murdered than boys aged 10 to 14. Older children are at greatest risk of violence, most of all around the age of 15.

Children who do not have parents or adults to protect, support and keep an eye on them are most at risk of violence in the community. There is more risk that children will be involved in violence if the communities they live in are very violent, for example if there are a lot of guns about.

Children who belong to a specific ethnic or religious *minority* are more at risk of violence, especially if there has been conflict in the community.

There is also a greater risk of violence against children who live in communities where there has been an emergency such as a flood, earthquake, civil war or *epidemic*.

40

## What needs to be done?

Governments should help communities to provide a safe environment for everyone who lives there, free from poverty and other things that may harm children. To do so, governments should:

- take action to reduce the risks to children, including:
  - making it harder to get hold of alcohol and drugs,
  - making it harder to own firearms and other weapons; and
  - taking action against the use of children in illegal activities.

## COMMUNITY

- reduce *inequality*. Governments should spend more money improving housing, employment, and education. There should be programmes in poor neighbourhoods to help people move away from poverty.
- make sure that police officers have training in *children's rights*, including information on how to deal properly with all children, especially those who face discrimination. The police need to understand much more about why children get into trouble, and how best to help them. This includes how to help children who are under the influence of alcohol or drugs.
- provide help, support and advice for children who have experienced violence. Governments should make sure children who have experienced violence have help and support from doctors, nurses and others. People who use violence against children should be punished, but should also be helped to stop using violence.
- set up long-term projects to help children show each other respect and not use violence. This includes making sure that boys and girls have safe places where they can enjoy themselves.
- make sure that public places are safe for children. For example, there should be safe routes for children to travel to school, or to visit their friends.
- work together to stop *trafficking* and *sexual exploitation* of children. Action should include:
  - changes to make children less vulnerable to *trafficking*;
  - police action against traffickers; and
  - making sure that victims of *trafficking* are not treated as criminals themselves.
- make distributing, owning or using child pornography a crime and make sure that the police take action.
- make sure that children who have been victims of *trafficking* are protected, and supported when they talk to the police, lawyers, judges and in a court of law. Children should have support from nurses, doctors and others to help them return to normal lives. The UN has written guidelines to help governments make sure that children are



treated properly when they are in a court of law. These guidelines are called the *UN Guidelines on Justice in Matters involving Child Victims and Witnesses of Crime*.

- take stronger action against people using the Internet, mobile phones and electronic games for sexual or other violent purposes against children.
- work with the Internet, mobile and computer game companies to make sure that children are protected from violence. This includes setting up safety measures on computers to make it safe for children to use them. Governments and companies should make sure that children and their carers are educated about the dangers of using the Internet, mobile phones and electronic games, and also about what they can do to protect themselves.

## WHAT NEXT?

## WHAT NEXT?

The Violence Study has brought together the *United Nations*, governments, communities, parents, children, young people and organisations. It is important that everyone who has been involved in the Violence Study, including children and young people, should continue to work together.

“We need your support to stop violence against children, not just in our region but all over the world.”

Young people, East Asia and the Pacific

The problem of violence against children must not become invisible again. The governments of countries around the world are responsible for making sure that the *recommendations* of the Violence Study are put into action. But it is also important that work to stop violence against children is done by organisations such as *UN* agencies, organisations in countries such as doctors’ and nurses’ associations, teachers’ organisations, parents’ forums and organisations working with and for children, and also by parents and children themselves.

43

## So what will happen now?

### In countries and regions:

- By 2007, every country should have made sure that stopping violence against children is included in their national plans. This means that each country should have clear ideas about what action to take, how long it will take, what will be achieved, and how much money it will cost.
- Every country should have a **focal point** – this could be a person, a team of people, or a government department which will make sure that violence against children is a priority, and that the plan is followed through.

- Every country should have **laws** that make it a crime to use violence against children.
- By 2009, every country should have a system for **collecting information** about violence against children.
- Every country should include a section on their work to stop violence against children in their **reports to the *Committee on the Rights of the Child***.
- The **UN and related organisations** should encourage and help governments to make these *recommendations* a reality. *UN* country teams should include action to address violence against children within the plans they make to reduce poverty, and in offering help with countries' development.
- Every country should have a system that children can use to **report violence** against them. This could be a national ombudsperson – a person that children can contact if they want to report violence. Or it could be a telephone helpline or an organisation that children can go to. This system should be completely confidential.
- **Regional organisations** played an important part during the Violence Study, and should continue to help countries take action on the Study's *recommendations*.

### **Internationally:**

- A **United Nations Special Representative on Violence Against Children** should be appointed. This is a person who will be appointed by the *UN* to make sure, that regions and countries follow up on the *recommendations* from the Violence Study. The UN Special Representative should be appointed for four years, and should make sure that international and national organisations, groups and associations get to hear about the *recommendations* from the Violence Study. The Special Representative will also make regular progress reports to the *Human Rights Council* and the *General Assembly*.
- **The Global Inter-Agency Group on Violence Against Children** already exists, and should work with the Special Representative to stop violence against children. The three organisations which take a lead on the Violence Study follow-up – the *OHCHR*,

## WHAT NEXT?

*WHO*, and *UNICEF* – will work with other *UN* agencies, representatives from *NGOs* and others to make sure that the *recommendations* of the Violence Study are followed up.

- **Working with the *UN Committee on the Rights of the Child*** – Under the Convention on the Rights of the Child, governments have to report on the situation of children in their country on a regular basis. Their reports have to be sent to the *Committee on the Rights of the Child*. The *UN* Special Representative for the Violence Study will work with the Committee to make sure that each report includes information about violence against children.
- **Working with other *UN Agencies*** – the *UN* Special Representative will work closely with other *UN Special Rapporteurs*, for example those who deal with armed conflict, sale of children, *child prostitution*, child pornography, and violence against women.
- ***International financial institutions***, such as the *International Monetary Fund (IMF)* and the *World Bank*, should think about how their actions affect children.

**If you want to know more about what you could do to help stop violence against children, you should read:**

**“Our Right to Be Protected from Violence: Activities for Learning and Taking Action for Children and Young People”**

## WORD BANK

abuse	bad treatment that causes physical or mental harm. See also child abuse.
bonded labour	working to repay a loan or a debt.
bullying	bullying includes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• People calling you names</li><li>• Making things up to get you into trouble</li><li>• Hitting, pinching, biting, pushing and shoving</li><li>• Taking things away from you</li><li>• Damaging your belongings</li><li>• Stealing your money</li><li>• Taking your friends away from you</li><li>• Spreading rumours</li><li>• Threats and intimidation</li><li>• Making silent or abusive phone calls</li><li>• Sending you offensive phone texts</li><li>• Posting insulting messages on the Internet</li><li>• Bullies can also frighten you so that you don't want to go to school, so that you pretend to be ill to avoid them.</li></ul>
campaign	a set of activities that people plan to achieve something. For example, a campaign to stop smacking of children might involve people talking to the government about a law, using the media to explain to people how wrong smacking is, and training people to use other ways of disciplining their children.

## WORD BANK

child abuse	any kind of harm done to children, including neglect, physical, sexual or mental violence by someone who is responsible for them, or has power or control over them, who they should be able to trust.
child-friendly	designed for children, and understandable to them.
child prostitution	when a child has sex in return for money or other rewards. Children may be forced into prostitution by other people or because they have no other way to survive. Child prostitution is against the law and is one of the worst forms of child abuse.
children in trouble with the law	children who have done something that is against the law in their community or country.
children's homes	places where groups of children who don't have parents or whose families cannot look after them, are looked after. See also Orphanages.



Committee on the Rights of the Child	<p>a group of experts on children from all over the world who meet in Geneva three times a year to hear what governments have been doing to protect and promote children’s rights, as set out in the “United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child”. The experts help governments to make sure that they take all the steps needed to make children’s rights real in their daily lives. They are chosen by representatives from all States that are parties to the Convention at a special meeting in New York.</p> <p>Countries that have ratified the Convention on the Rights of the Child have to send regular reports to the Committee on children’s rights in their country. The Committee looks at these reports and tells countries what they need to do to make sure that children’s rights are protected, and that everyone knows about children’s rights.</p>
community	a group of people that know each other, or live near each other (local community), or have other things in common such as an interest or belief.
consultations	asking people what they think; this word is used to describe the meetings that took place around the world during the Violence Study process, where young people were able to say what they thought.
convention	an international agreement on a subject. For example, the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child.

## WORD BANK

Convention Against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment	an international agreement to stop any treatment that causes severe pain or suffering to someone, either mental or physical, in order to get information, to get them to admit or agree to something, or to scare them.
Convention on Elimination of All Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW)	an international agreement, often described as an international bill of rights for women. It explains what is meant by discrimination against women and what governments can do to stop it.
Convention on the Rights of the Child	the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child is a document that spells out the basic human rights to which children everywhere are entitled. 192 countries in the world have signed up to the Convention. You can find out more about it at: <a href="http://www.unicef.org/crc">http://www.unicef.org/crc</a> .
corporal punishment	punishment to a person's body – see physical punishment.
Council on Human Rights	the United Nations Council on Human Rights looks into human rights issues across the world. It was set up in March 2006 by the UN General Assembly. It replaces the old UN Commission on Human Rights. It has 47 members.
death penalty	when someone is executed (killed) when a court of law has found them responsible for a serious crime.
degrading treatment	treating people without respect, humiliating them.

detention	places where people who are accused or found guilty of breaking the law are locked up as punishment.
discrimination	when a powerful person or group of people treat less powerful people or groups badly and unfairly. Many people experience discrimination, including women and girls, people from some minority groups including ethnic or cultural groups, and disabled people.
discipline	punishing children for something that they've done wrong, or because they have not behaved in a way the adult likes.
displaced people	people who cannot stay in their own homes because of a war, disaster or other emergencies which force them to escape from where they have lived to a safer area.
early forced marriage	when a girl is forced to marry someone against her will while she is still a child.
emotional violence	making a child feel bad. This can be done by using insults, name calling, isolating or rejecting a child, threats, or being indifferent to what happens to a child.
epidemic	an illness that spreads very quickly to a large group of people.
expert	someone who knows a lot about a subject.
exploitation	mistreatment, taking unfair advantage of someone, for personal gain. As in making a child work to pay off his or her parents' debts, or making children do dangerous or illegal work (such as child prostitution) to make someone else better off.

## WORD BANK

family	meaning not just parents and children, but everyone who might be thought of as part of a child's family. The extended family includes grandparents, aunts and uncles, cousins and others.
female genital mutilation (FGM)	the removal of all or part of girls' or women's external sexual organs, or injury to them, for any reason other than medical treatment. Sometimes called 'female circumcision', this is a tradition in some parts of the world.
foster care	children who cannot stay with their own families may be put with other families on a temporary basis while decisions are made about their future.
gender	a child is born male or female – this is his or her sex. As they grow up to be a boy or a girl and then a man or a woman, they learn what is expected of them in their particular society and culture – this is gender.
General Assembly	the UN's General Assembly is a place where representatives of 192 countries get together and discuss the world's most important issues. It meets in New York. Although the UN is not a world government, it is a place where countries can agree on how they want to work together.
General Comment	a report by the United Nations that gives more explanations about a subject. For example, General Comment 8 on the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child makes it clear that physical punishment of children is never allowed. You can find out more about it at: <a href="http://www.ohchr.org">www.ohchr.org</a>

honour killings	when men kill girls or women in the name of family 'honour', for having sex outside marriage, sometimes even when they have been victims of rape, or for example, for refusing an arranged marriage or seeking a divorce.
human rights and child rights	rights belonging to everyone because they are human, including rights to basic freedoms, and to have what they need to survive, develop and participate in society. Adults have rights and so do children.
ILO Convention 138	an international agreement that all countries will set a minimum age under which children cannot be allowed to work. For most work children will have to be at least 15 years old, but for dangerous work the minimum age should be set at 18.
ILO Convention 182	an international agreement that all countries will forbid the worst forms of child labour for all children under the age of 18. This includes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• slavery, trafficking of children, bondage and other types of forced work</li> <li>• forced recruitment of children into armies</li> <li>• use of children for prostitution, production of pornography</li> <li>• use of children for illegal work, in particular for drug trafficking</li> <li>• work which is likely to harm the health, safety and well-being of children.</li> </ul>
imprisonment	locking people up, putting them in a prison or other institutions that they cannot leave when they would like to.

## WORD BANK

indigenous people	the original or native inhabitants of a place, the people who first lived in a place. Often now in danger from other people who want control over their land or resources.
inequality	the state of being unequal. Inequality means that there is a difference, but also that one is or has more or less than the other. Power inequality means one has more power than the other.
international financial institutions	organisations that work on money matters across the world, not just at country or regional level. See also International Monetary Fund and World Bank.
International Labour Organisation (ILO)	a specialised UN agency which works for the rights of all people, including children, who work. It was founded in 1919. It has a separate section looking at the rights of working children.
international law	laws that most countries have signed up to and have agreed to obey.
International Monetary Fund (IMF)	an international organisation that aims to help countries to work together on money matters. It has 184 member countries.
loitering	hanging around.
mental violence	insulting, degrading or humiliating someone; hurting someone's feelings or causing emotional harm.
minority group	a group of people who are different from a larger group in a society, because of ethnic, religious or other differences. Minority groups often have little power.
mistreatment	treating a child or a young person badly.

monitoring	checking to make sure that something has been done.
mutilation	deliberately damaging or disfiguring someone's body; see also female genital mutilation.
neglect	not being looked after properly, failing to care.
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation – used by the UN to describe all organisations that are not part of a government and are not working to make a profit. Many NGOs exist to help people who have some sort of problem (such as poverty or disability), or to protect something (such as animals or plants).
OHCHR	the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights – the High Commissioner is appointed by the UN Secretary-General. The Office aims to help ensure and promote human rights for all.
Optional Protocol for the Convention Against Torture	an international agreement which says that no one should be tortured when in prison. This agreement also helps to set up a system of independent visits to make sure children and other prisoners are treated well when in detention.
organised crime	when gangs or some other illegal organisations, for example the Mafia, make money through crime.
orphan	a child whose parents have died.
orphanages	places where children whose parents have died and whose families cannot care for them are looked after.
participation	being involved in, playing a part in, something. Having your voice heard and being taken seriously – usually when decisions are being taken about something.

## WORD BANK

physical punishment	physical punishment covers any kind of physical violence including smacking, beating, whipping which is done with the intention of controlling, educating, or disciplining.
Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children	an international agreement to prevent and stop trafficking in people and to make countries work together to stop trafficking. It includes ideas about action that countries can take to stop traffickers but also on how to help the victims.
ratify	to sign up to a law, to say that your country will abide by it and make sure that all citizens obey that law.
recommendations	ideas or suggestions about what someone can do to make a situation better.
refugees	people who have had to leave their country because of war, disaster or other emergencies or because of persecution and who cannot return there.
research	careful study and investigation for the purpose of discovering and explaining new knowledge.
Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court	an international agreement to set up an independent international court which deals with very serious crimes that many countries would be concerned about, for example, war crimes, genocide and crimes against humanity. The agreement was signed by more than 100 countries.
scavenging	looking for things that can be sold on rubbish tips or on the street.



Secretary-General	the head of the UN, elected by all governments of the world. Currently Kofi Annan is the Secretary-General. He was elected in 1997 and is the UN's seventh Secretary-General.
sexual abuse of children	any kind of sexual activity inflicted on children, especially by someone who is responsible for them, or has power or control over them, and who they should be able to trust.
sexual exploitation	mistreating, abusing and/or taking advantage of someone for personal gain and profit, by involving them in prostitution or sexual activity which is illegal or inappropriate.
slavery	being sold to work for other people without having any say over what happens to you.
stigma	when other people look down on you; a long-lasting mark or stain on a child's character or reputation, a disgrace.
street children	a street child or street kid is a child who lives on the street – in particular, one that is not taken care of by parents or other adults – and who sleeps on the street because he or she does not have a home.
torture	to cause severe pain or suffering to someone, either mental or physical, in order to obtain information, to get them to admit or agree to something, or to scare them.
trafficking	illegal trading (that is, buying and selling) in people, especially women and children for sexual purposes but also men and boys for other purposes. Takes place in a country from rural to urban areas and across the borders from different countries, especially between richer and poorer countries.

## WORD BANK

treaty monitoring bodies	organisations set up by the UN to make sure that governments take action as promised in international agreements they have ratified.
truancy	not going to school.
UNICEF	the United Nation's Children's Fund, originally set up in 1946 as the UN International Children's Emergency Fund. The main organisation in the UN which works for the protection, survival and development of children. It works closely with governments around the world to provide services for children such as medicines, vaccines, water, food and schooling.
UN	the UN (United Nations) was created after the Second World War to provide a place for all the countries in the world to discuss issues and solve problems that affect them all. (All the members together are called the UN General Assembly.) The United Nations is based in New York and Geneva, but also has offices in other countries. If you want to find out more about the United Nations, go to: <a href="http://www.un.org">http://www.un.org</a> .
UN Guidelines on Justice in Matters involving Child Victims and Witnesses of Crime	these guidelines were created to help make sure that children who have been harmed by crime and children who have seen others harmed are protected and treated fairly when they say what happened to them in a court of law.
UN Special Rapporteurs	people appointed by the UN to send in regular reports on a problem that the UN is concerned about, for example the Special Rapporteur on Torture.

vagrancy	not having a home to go to, living on the streets.
WHO	World Health Organisation– the World Health Organisation is the UN specialist agency for health. The organisation works to help control disease and improve general standards of health and nutrition through international cooperation. It works to make sure that all people across the world can have the highest possible level of health.
World Bank	the World Bank offers loans, grants and other kinds of help to developing countries. Not a bank in the usual sense, it aims to reduce poverty around the world.



ISBN-10 92-95057-52-X  
ISBN-13 978-92-95057-52-4

