

An illustration of two hands, one larger and one smaller, reaching towards each other in a gesture of support or connection. The hands are white with blue outlines, set against a teal background with a dark blue border.

HELPatHAND

**A toolkit to change attitudes and behaviour
around the physical punishment of children**

Handbook

Welcome to the *Help at Hand Handbook*. This handbook is designed as an introduction to the web resource *Help at Hand Toolkit*, which you can find at www.helpathandtoolkit.info

The *Help at Hand Handbook* has been produced by 'Sdim Curo Plant!/Children are Unbeatable! in Wales.

It is intended to accompany the *Help at Hand Toolkit* – a web resource that can be found at www.helpathandtoolkit.info

The project has been sponsored by the Welsh Assembly Government

and by

Barnardo's Cymru
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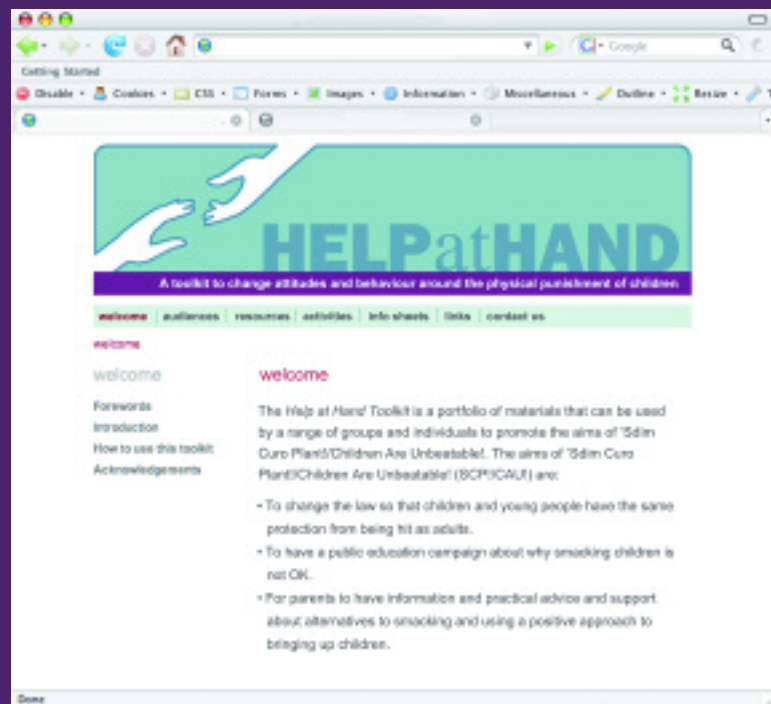
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Children in Wales, February 2008.

Design by The Old School.



A screenshot from the web resource *Help at Hand Toolkit* available at www.helpathandtoolkit.info



This handbook is set out to match the website's menu bar.

What's in this handbook...

This handbook is set out to match the menu bar of the website (see opposite).

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WELCOME

Introduction

The *Help at Hand Toolkit* is a portfolio of materials that can be used by a range of groups and individuals to promote the aims of 'Sdim Curo Plant!/Children Are Unbeatable! (SCP!/CAU!).

The aims of SCP!/CAU! are:

- To change the law so that children and young people have the same protection from being hit as adults.
- To have a public education campaign about why smacking children is not OK.
- For parents to have information and practical advice and support about alternatives to smacking and positive approaches to bringing up children.

The purpose of the toolkit is to provide materials that can be used to:

- Increase the number of people who actively support legal change in the UK.
- Decrease the incidence of physical punishment of children.
- Decrease the percentage of the population who find physical punishment of children acceptable.

We recognise that – while parents and carers are an important target group for this work – because it is about cultural change, every member of our society is part of the audience we want to reach. This approach is reflected in the toolkit.

Forewords

Sdim Curo Plant!/Children Are Unbeatable! (SCP!/CAU!) campaigns in Wales to change the law to give children the same protection from assault that is afforded to adults in this country.

Our position is supported by over 400 organisations that work with children and families, all four UK Children's Commissioners, and the Welsh Assembly Government.

Currently, the power to change the law resides with the UK Parliament and not with the National Assembly for Wales. We therefore actively campaign for reform at Westminster with a number of Welsh MPs and Peers at the forefront of the political lobby.

In Wales, we work with non-governmental organisations, local authorities, health and other public bodies, churches, civil society, and the Welsh Assembly Government. We aim to raise awareness, inform and educate parents – and those working with parents – about the injustice and dangers of smacking children and to actively promote positive parenting and alternative ways for parents and carers to discipline children. At the same time we encourage approaches that support children to actively claim their rights.

This easy-to-use toolkit brings together the best resources we have found to help raise awareness, inform, and educate a wide range of audiences. It is informed by our collective experiences and evaluated practice.

In our work with children, parents, carers, professionals, members of the public, policymakers and politicians, we have found that many people who support the right of parents or carers to hit or smack their children change

their minds when they have the opportunity to consider the issues.

It seems there is no one, single reason why people change their minds and the toolkit is informed by the most common reasons we have identified. For example, some people realise that children have a right not to be hit, just as adults do. Other people – particularly with support on alternatives – change their minds when they come to understand that smacking is not an effective way of getting children to behave well.

Nineteen countries in Europe have now acted to give children protection from assault that is equal to that afforded to adults. Of the 27 countries of the European Union, only five (including the UK) fail to give children equal protection or have not made a commitment.

I am in no doubt that it is not a question of 'if' the law will be changed in the UK, rather a question of 'when'. This toolkit will help to ensure that we in Wales are ahead of the game.

We aim to make a vital contribution to the public education campaign, helping to change attitudes and behaviour and bring about a reduction in the use of physical punishment against children. To achieve this aim this toolkit must touch a wide range of people from all walks of life – not just professionals or childcare experts.

It is with pleasure and much pride that I commend this toolkit to you. Please use it as part of your contribution towards bringing an end to the smacking of children in Wales and towards creating a society where children are treated with dignity and respect.

Anne Crowley
Chair SCP!/CAU! Strategy Group

I am very pleased to welcome the publication of this toolkit, which offers practical suggestions to adults working with parents, families and children, on how they can change the experience of parenting for the better.

Unfortunately, people often think in terms of parental – rather than children's – rights in this context, and working to secure the fundamental right of equal protection for children can be particularly challenging even for professionals who are committed to this end.

My office has been associated with the 'Sdim Curo Plant!/Children Are Unbeatable!' campaign since it was established in 2001. In the intervening period we have seen positive developments in Wales that give me considerable optimism that children and young people will increasingly be treated with the respect they deserve and be taken seriously. While the policy message is clear – smacking has no place in 21st Century Wales – the challenge of changing practice and the real life experience of children remains.

It is commonplace to hear that raising children is a very difficult job. It's a role that most of us take on without knowledge or experience of what works, or doesn't work, in managing children's behaviour. This toolkit will help those working to support parents and carers to raise awareness of the underlying concerns around a child's human rights and also to encourage a deeper understanding which will result in a more enjoyable and less stressful family life for everyone concerned.

Keith Towler
Children's Commissioner for Wales

AUDIENCES

Overview of the audiences section of the toolkit

Ending the physical punishment of children is everybody's business.

This section looks at different audiences for this topic, how to encourage them to think about the issues, and what everyone can do to end the physical punishment of children.

Choose the audience you wish to work with, then look through the suggestions for what kind of work you can do and what materials are available to do it.

Audiences considered are as follows:

- Children
- Young people
- Parents, family and carers
- Professionals who work with families, children and young people
- Trainers and educators who work with the professionals of today and tomorrow
- Organisations, policymakers and stakeholders
- The wider public

Particular areas of influence are:

- Gathering information and attitudes about physical punishment
- Why physical punishment is not OK
- Why legal change is necessary, and getting involved in campaigning
- Positive parenting
- Creating a culture and environment which respects children and young people, and prevents physical punishment

You can then use the website to find the materials that have been recommended. We've grouped the materials into two types:

- **Resources** are materials that have been developed by other groups. You'll find reviews of each resource on the website and information on where to find them. Some of the resources are available free, often as PDFs that can be downloaded from the Internet; others are available to purchase.
- **Activities** are materials that have been developed by 'Sdim Curo Plant!/Children Are Unbeatable! in Wales.

Children and young people

SCP!/CAU! works to create a legal and cultural environment where children and young people can grow up without being victims of physical punishment.

Children and young people are an important audience for work on physical punishment. They can tell us how children really experience physical punishment. They can campaign for full recognition of their rights. They can explore physical punishment in wider contexts, such as the rights of the child, domestic abuse and parenting.

Research done over the last 15 years shows that children and young people tend to be more aware than adults that:

- Physical punishment goes against their human rights
- Physical punishment is ineffective in changing behaviour
- Physical punishment hurts
- Physical punishment damages the relationship between adults and children
- Physical punishment is humiliating, shameful and embarrassing

See resources:

- *Listen Up! Children Talk ... About Smacking* (Resource 4)
- *It Hurts You Inside* (Resource 17)
- *It Doesn't Sort Anything* (Resource 19)
- *It's a Hit, not a Smack* (Resource 44)

Children and young people are tomorrow's parents. Working with them now will encourage them to think about these issues before they have their own children, and will help to change the culture of the future.

CASE STUDY – CHILDREN

The Children and Young People's Framework Partnership were running a one-day seminar on ending the physical punishment of children. They were basing the seminar on *Hitting People is Wrong ... and Children are People Too* (Resource 37). They asked the head of a local primary school to gather some information and provide some visual material from children that they could use as part of the seminar.

The head consulted the *Help at Hand Toolkit* and found the section on 'Children' in the **audiences** section of the website. He worked with two teachers to create a session based on *Listen Up! Children Talk ... About Smacking* (Resource 4). The session involves an alien puppet called Squiggle who wants to find out about how things are on Earth. Squiggle has heard about smacking and asks lots of questions about it. The answers were collated onto large displays, which the children then illustrated.

The teachers took the answers to "What does it feel like to be smacked?" back to the children. The children were asked to create masks from large paper bags that illustrated to Squiggle how it feels to be smacked. The head had been inspired by seeing pictures of work done by young people for *Respecting Children, Supporting Parents* (Resource 46).

The displays and the masks were all shown at the seminar.

Parents and carers

SCP!/CAU!'s third aim is for parents to have information, practical advice and support about alternatives to smacking and positive approaches to bringing up children.

There is now a consensus among those working with children, young people and families across the UK that the best way to bring up children is with a positive approach. This approach is generally known as 'positive parenting'.

Margo (2008) identified that "Specific parenting styles are proven to be particularly important in positive social and emotional development. These include:

- Consistency in rules and style
- Warmth and interest
- Stability and security
- Authority without hostility"¹

There is a wealth of materials, support and information available today in a variety of formats. You can find out more about these by looking at the 'Positive Parenting' section on the **links** page of the website.

The *Help at Hand Toolkit* section for parents gives ideas for working with parents and carers specifically on the topic of physical punishment. Some positive parenting material is included in many of the resources and activities detailed on the website, but only materials with particular relevance to physical punishment are included.

CASE STUDY – PARENTS

Staff in a women's refuge were concerned that many families in the refuge used smacking as a method of disciplining their children, although they were not permitted to smack in the refuge. The families were at a particularly stressful point in their lives, and coping with many problems. Most families do not stay for very long, and the opportunities for doing detailed work were limited.

Staff needed brief information that could stay with the women when they left the refuge.

Staff looked at the **resources** section of the toolkit, and referred to the page on leaflets. They looked at the reviews on several leaflets, and chose *Behave Yourself* (Resource 27) and *The Safe Parenting Handbook* (Resource 5).

The leaflet *Behave Yourself* puts smacking and positive parenting together and helps a parent to see how other methods get a better result. *The Safe Parenting Handbook* places smacking alongside many other issues that are of concern to parents, and is a valuable resource for any parent. It has the benefit of being produced by local authorities rather than children's agencies, and may be less stigmatising for some parents. It also contains a section on domestic abuse.

The staff also bought a *Hands are Not for Hitting* poster (Resource 24) and two children's books called *Hands are Not for Hitting* (Resources 13 and 14) for the children's room at the refuge. They hoped to help parents make the link between adult violence, domestic abuse and physical violence towards children disguised as smacking.

¹ Margo J (2008) *Make Me a Criminal; Preventing Youth Crime*. London: Institute for Public Policy Research. Citing Stanley K (ed) (2005) *Daddy Dearest? Active fatherhood and public policy*. London: Institute for Public Policy Research and Waldfogel J (2006) 'What Children Need'. *Public Policy Research*, 13:1.

Professionals and students

Almost all the major agencies and organisations and professional associations in the UK that work with children and young people are supporters of the 'Sdim Curo Plant!/ Children Are Unbeatable! campaign.

You can find a detailed list of supporters on the 'Sdim Curo Plant!/ Children Are Unbeatable! website: www.childrenareunbeatable.org.uk

SCP!/CAU! has delivered training and information to a wide range of groups and individuals. We have data from surveys and anecdotal sources that suggest:

- Some professionals do not personally see anything wrong with smacking, and therefore are not committed to delivering a no-smacking message.
- Some professionals are committed to the no-smacking message, but are not confident to deliver it to their clients or service users.
- Many professionals are committed to delivering a no-smacking message in their work, but do not understand the necessity for legal change.
- Courses for students training to work with children, parents and families in whatever guise, do not generally look at issues to do with physical punishment.

We have found that most training we deliver succeeds in changing attitudes or improving confidence and knowledge in these areas.

The materials recommended in this section will support professionals and those who educate them to develop skills and knowledge, change attitudes to support legal reform and cultural change, and the education of parents in non-violent discipline and positive parenting.

CASE STUDY – PROFESSIONALS

The Flying Start Co-ordinator arranged a training day for staff in his team and associated teams to look at ensuring that all staff were delivering the no-smacking message as part of their positive parenting work. Staff attending the training included health visitors and midwives, those delivering parenting courses and basic skills courses, and family centre staff.

He was aware that the range of opinions on physical punishment was very wide in the group attending.

He put together a training plan from the **activities** section of the toolkit, including:

- *Pairs* (Activity 4) and *Handshake* (Activity 2)
- *The Sun Shines On* (Activity 5)
- *Open Space* (Activity 17)
- *Long Powerpoint* (Activity 15)

He then introduced the *Help at Hand Toolkit* and, working in small and large groups, asked participants to identify the resources they needed to work with their service users. He ended the training with:

- *Eco Maps* (Activity 10)
- *Hands Are For... Cool Down* (Activity 8)

Organisations and policymakers

Organisations and policymakers have a role in changing culture to bring about an end to the physical punishment of children. This can range from inserting one line into an existing policy, to the attempts of the Welsh Assembly Government to change the law in Wales (see Info sheet 8).

Their role and how it relates to the three aims of SCP!/CAU! are as follows.

AIM ONE: To change the law so that children and young people have the same protection from being hit as adults

Currently, the power to amend the law resides at Westminster and representation should be made to the local MP or the Secretary of State at the Department for Children, Schools and Families. (You can e-mail MPs through the website www.parliament.uk or use the simple and effective www.writetothem.com)

Organisations can ensure that their own policies reflect equal protection for children. They can provide information and training to members and employees to ensure that the no-smacking message is delivered at all levels of the organisation. They can encourage members and projects to campaign for legal change. They can conduct research within and outside the agency to support the campaign.

AIM TWO: To have a public education campaign about why smacking children is not OK

Organisations may be able to spread the messages of the campaign to a wider audience through their membership, through local interest, through promoting their policy to other agencies and individuals – although this would not replace the government-led public information campaign that would be required when legal change happens.

CASE STUDY – ORGANISATIONS

A family centre manager was asked by the local Children & Youth Partnership to do a 20-minute presentation to the group about ending the physical punishment of children. The aim was to encourage the various organisations to give the issue more attention themselves, and to achieve a consensus for the partnership to become a formal supporter of 'Sdim Curo Plant!/Children Are Unbeatable!'

The manager looked at materials for changing attitudes towards legal change in the 'Professionals and students' section. She created a short session based on the following:

- *The Sun Shines On* (Activity 5), using a show of hands, and asking for less personal information.
- *Short Powerpoint* (Activity 16)
- *Hands Are For... Cool Down* (Activity 8)

She also handed out packs, which included the *CAU! Campaign Handbook* (Resource 9), the *Help at Hand Handbook* (Resource 50 – this handbook), *Help at Hand: Taking a Positive Approach to Parenting* (Resource 26), and some membership forms for SCP!/CAU!

The partnership decided to sign up. They then organised an awareness-raising seminar, based on *Hitting People is Wrong* (Resource 37) for managers and lead staff. It was followed by a multi-agency training day for staff about working with clients and service users on the issues. This was put together using materials from the *Help at Hand Toolkit*.

AIM THREE: For parents to have lots of information and practical advice and support about alternatives to smacking and positive approaches to bringing up children

Organisations can provide this as appropriate. Policymakers should ensure that all developments in the promotion of positive parenting include clear information that children have a right to equal protection.

The wider public

Ending the physical punishment of children is everybody's business. In order to bring about legal change and change in the home, people beyond the agencies who work with children and families need to understand the principles behind the campaign.

SCP!/CAU! have worked with a range of agencies to develop support for legal change, and also to encourage those agencies to consider how they as an organisation respect children and support them to live happy and healthy lives.

An example of such agencies include:

- Trade unions
- Student unions
- Local political parties
- Local groups such as the WI, Mother's Union, Merched y Wawr.
- Local and national religious groups
- Charities not working directly with children and families
- Private businesses
- Magazines, newspapers and other media

CASE STUDY – THE WIDER PUBLIC

A member of the WI noticed leaflets in the community hall that had been left out for parents at the playgroup. She was surprised to read the material about positive parenting and how smacking children was a breach of their human rights and not a good or effective means of disciplining children and felt it contrasted strongly with her own experiences as a child and a parent.

She spoke to the playgroup leader, who gave her more information about SCP!/CAU!. She sent off for more information from the campaign, and found the *Help at Hand Toolkit*.

Based on the information it contained, she ran Topics 1 and 2 from *Respecting Children* (Resource 2) in her local group, inviting members of other groups including the local churches, playgroup, and school to attend.

The WI went on to create a multi-media collage on *Respecting Children* in partnership with the playgroup. Individual members became campaign supporters, although it was not possible to achieve a great enough consensus for the whole group to join. Some members would not attend the sessions, and held firmly to their beliefs about the usefulness and validity of physical punishment.

RESOURCES

Overview of the resources section of the toolkit

In the toolkit, resources are materials that have been developed by other groups.

In the **resources** section of the website you'll find an 'Overview of resources' table. This gives you a brief overview of each resource. You can then follow the links to see a fuller review of each resource.

You can use the lefthand menu to sort the resources according to usefulness, type, audience, topic and source.

We have included the resources that we consider to be the most useful. You will find additional resources in the **links** section of the toolkit.

The *Help at Hand Toolkit* is designed to be a growing resource, which will adapt over time. If you wish to add material to the toolkit, please go to the **contact us** section of the website, and follow the instructions there.

The number of the resource in the *Help at Hand Toolkit*. The larger groupwork packs are reviewed by session, topic or module, so it may also give particular session details.

The title of the resource.

Resources are scored from 0–5 on their usefulness specifically in relation to ending the physical punishment of children. We have only included resources scoring 2 or above.

This tells you what kind of resource this is – a pack, session, activity, leaflet, DVD/video, research paper, organisation, or report.

This tells you the main audiences for this resource.

The main topics of this resource – children's rights, positive parenting, the law and physical punishment, gathering information and attitudes, influencing attitudes, campaigning, policymaking, or creating a culture and environment.

A brief description of the resource, usually taken from the resource itself.

This tells you who wrote the resource (if it has a named author) and which organisation produced the resource.

Where to get the resource including web links where they are available.

Comments from a SCP!/CAU! reviewer about how relevant the resource is and how easy it is to use with its target groups.

Example of a resource on the website



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A toolkit to tackle smacking and end the physical punishment of children

[welcome](#) | [audiences](#) | [resources](#) | [activities](#) | [info sheets](#) | [links](#) | [contact us](#)

resources >> Overview of resources >> Resource 27: Behave yourself!

resources
[Resource example](#)
[Overview of resources](#)
[... by usefulness](#)
[... by type](#)
[... by audience](#)
[... by topic](#)
[... by source](#)

Resource 27: Behave yourself!

Usefulness

Leaflet for parenting giving top tips for positive parenting with particular reference to not using smacking.

Type

Leaflet

Audience

Parents, young parents

Topic

Positive parenting

Information

This leaflet is about positive ways of encouraging good behaviour in children. It includes:

- * 10 steps to better parenting, e.g. love, listen, limits, laughter and praise
- * Discussion on helping children behave well
- * Positive choices for parents, e.g. positive commands, a child-friendly environment, and not using shouting or smacking

Source

NSPCC

Where to get it

http://www.nspcc.org.uk/helpandadvice/publications/leaflets/behave_pdf_wdf36169.pdf
For a sample of this and about eight other leaflets, including Resource 28 and Resource 29, please send a request for a Parenting Pack, along with an A4 stamped addressed envelope with £1.70 in stamps to:

NSPCC Publications
Weston House
42 Curtain Rd
London EC2A 3NH

Email: publications@nspcc.org.uk
Telephone: 020 7825 7422

To check this is up to date, go to:
http://www.nspcc.org.uk/helpandadvice/publications/leaflets/parentingleaflets_wda38357

Bulk orders can be made from NSPCC at 15p a copy, minimum order £5, online, details as above.

Comments

This leaflet covers four sides of A4, but retains a leaflet style format. It is clearly and attractively printed and illustrated. It is particularly useful as it carries the messages against smacking throughout. It does require literacy, but the short points make it easy to read.

ACTIVITIES

Overview of the activities section of the toolkit

In the toolkit, activities are materials that have been developed or adapted by SCP!/CAU!

In the **activities** section of the website you'll find an 'Overview of activities' table, which gives you a brief overview of each activity.

You can then follow the links to see a full description of how to deliver the activity, as well as ideas about alternative ways of doing it.

You can also use the lefthand menu to sort the activities according to type, size of group, audience, etc.

The *Help at Hand Toolkit* is designed to be a growing resource, which will adapt over time. If you wish to add material to the toolkit, please go to the **contact us** section of the website, and follow the instructions there.

The number of the activity in the *Help at Hand Toolkit*.

The name of the activity.

The purpose of the activity.

The type of activity – warm-up, main activity, cool-down, etc.

The size of group that this can be used for.

The main audiences for this activity.

How long the activity should take.

What materials and equipment are needed, including copies of info sheets from the toolkit.

There then follows a description of how to deliver the activity and any variations.

Example of an activity on the website



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 [contact us](#)

activities >> Overview of activities >> Activity 1: Euphemisms

activities

Activity 1: Euphemisms


Activity example


Overview of activities


... by objective


... by type

... by group size


 **Objective**
Explores the different terms that are used to describe and "disguise" hitting children. Introduces the topic, and its seriousness.

 **Type**
Warm-up

 **Group size**
6+

 **Audience**
Suitable when the group are aware of the topic, and there is some degree of sympathy.

 **Time**
5 mins

 **Materials**
Supported by **Info sheet 1: Euphemisms**

Task

Ask the group to think of as many euphemisms as they can for smacking or hitting children. Suggest a few to them, so they have something to work from (see **Info sheet 1**). Say that, if they can't think of a new one, they can say one which has been said already.

At the end, ask the group to consider how a euphemism makes hitting a child seem less serious. Look at quotations from **Info sheet 15**.

Variations

Think up quotations that are associated with smacking.

Explore phrases from other languages.

INFO SHEETS

Overview of the info sheets section of the toolkit

In the toolkit, the **info sheets** provide concise information on a range of topics.

The info sheets are presented in PDF format so that they can be easily downloaded.

They include factual information, tips and advice, pictures, a questionnaire, and visual aids to delivering other materials.

Some info sheets are mentioned in the **resources** and **activities** sections of the website – they can be used as worksheets or handouts.



LINKS

Overview of the **links** section of the toolkit

The **links** section on the website provides links to other organisations and information relating to ending the physical punishment of children. These include a selection of:

- Links to many of the organisations mentioned elsewhere in the toolkit.
- Books and reports that offer a more detailed exploration of one area.
- Organisations that support SCP!/CAU!, but whose public work is not directly about these issues.
- Parenting packs that promote positive parenting.
- Leaflets that promote positive parenting and related topics.

'Sdim Curo Plant!/Children Are Unbeatable! campaigns in Wales to change the law to give children the same protection in law from assault that is afforded to adults in this country. Please use this toolkit as part of your contribution to bringing about an end to the smacking of children in Wales and towards creating a society where children are treated with dignity and respect.