



# Tuvalu Positive Behaviour Management for Children Handbook



Pacific  
Community  
Communauté  
du Pacifique





# Tuvalu Positive Behaviour Management for Children Handbook

Prepared by the Human Rights and Social Development division,  
Pacific Community and UNICEF Pacific



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Suva, Fiji, 2020

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## About the handbook

This publication is one of the outcomes of a Social Citizenship Education (SCE) programme for school children carried out by the Human Rights and Social Development (HRSD) division of the Pacific Community (SPC) in Tuvalu.

Social Citizenship Education emphasises those social rights and obligations necessary to be part of, and enjoy equal opportunities, benefits and status in, a community. It refers to active, informed and responsible citizens who know their human rights and responsibilities, practice gender equality, non-discrimination and inclusion, eschew violence, are concerned about the welfare of others, and are willing to contribute to the development of their country. Citizens with these skills, attitudes and knowledge will only occur when teachers give students the opportunity to learn about and practise being 'social citizens'. An enabling environment which includes an environment free from violence and corporal punishment is also important to sustain such skills, which will involve parents and the community at large participating and contributing to this development.

Corporal punishment is a controversial subject in Tuvalu and indeed across the Pacific, even though the research is extremely telling and very clear and consistent about the negative effects on children. Many studies have shown that physical punishment — including spanking, hitting and other means of causing pain — can lead to increased aggression, antisocial behaviour, physical injury and mental health problems for children.

On the international front, physical discipline is increasingly being viewed as a violation of children's human rights. This is enshrined in the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC), which Tuvalu ratified in 1995.

The obligation to prohibit all corporal punishment of children falls directly under articles 19, 28(2) and 37 of the Convention.

Art. 19: "(1) States Parties shall take all appropriate legislative, administrative, social and educational measures to protect the child from all forms of physical or mental violence, injury or abuse, neglect or negligent treatment, maltreatment or exploitation, including sexual abuse, while in the care of parent(s), legal guardian(s) or any other person who has the care of the child...."

Art. 28(2): "States Parties shall take all appropriate measures to ensure that school discipline is administered in a manner consistent with the child's human dignity and in conformity with the present Convention."

Art. 37: "States Parties shall ensure that: (a) No child shall be subjected to torture or other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment. Neither capital punishment nor life imprisonment without possibility of release shall be imposed for offences committed by persons below eighteen years of age...."

Section 29 of the Tuvalu Education Act (1976) states that no teacher, other than a headteacher, shall administer corporal punishment to any pupil. This has been repealed by the Education Amendment Act (2017) in its entirety as it contradicts the principles enshrined in the CRC in protecting and respecting the rights and dignity of children. The amendment prohibits corporal punishment in any form and manifestation.

While corporal punishment was banned in schools in Tuvalu teachers did not have the necessary tools and knowledge on alternative and more positive means of behaviour management. Hence the SCE project in Tuvalu commissioned two educational resources on corporal punishment and positive behaviour management in schools. The target audience is teachers, parents and community members, and a key stakeholder is the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports. The purpose of the resources is to assist in the transition away from corporal punishment by educating people on Tuvaluan laws with regards to corporal punishment, the harmful impacts of corporal punishment on children and alternative positive discipline methods.

The two videos are 5-10 minutes each. One is designed to guide Tuvaluan teachers and school stakeholders on their obligations to provide a safe environment for children in schools and in the community in accordance with Tuvalu child protection laws and policies. The other is designed to empower school stakeholders to abandon corporal punishment and effectively use positive behaviour management approaches.

Physical punishment can work momentarily to stop problematic behaviour because children are afraid of being hit, but it doesn't work in the long term and can make children more aggressive. On the other hand, positive behaviour strategies are evidence-based, proactive approaches to changing challenging student behaviour. Positive behaviour strategies encourage parents and teachers to see behaviour as a form of communication. Every behaviour sends a message about what a child needs. Some messages are easy to read. Some need more deciphering. Once you understand the message behind the behaviour, children can be better supported.

## How to use this handbook

This handbook contains reflection questions for both videos as well as information on guidance and information on positive behaviour management. Behaviour management is a whole school approach to creating an environment to promote positive behaviour and reduce opportunities for poor behaviour. Behaviour management is also about responding to poor behaviour in a way that not only allows students to take responsibility for their behaviour but provides them with an opportunity to learn and change. Behaviour management recognises that sometimes there are underlying causes for poor student behaviour, including lack of supervision and parental guidance, family and relationship problems, peer pressure, illness and death amongst family members, drug and alcohol abuse and economic hardship that students need help to deal with. A whole school approach to behaviour management includes student-centred school rules, fair discipline processes, classroom management, strategies to work with parents and

community, praise and reward systems, participation, effective school management, counselling and support and professionally trained teachers.

The hand book is user friendly and a one-stop shop giving confidence to teachers, parents and community members in understanding the issues surrounding corporal punishment and moving a step closer to realising children's right to protection from all forms of violence in all settings.

As Tuvalu is a faith-based society there is a section on what the Bible correctly says about the treatment of children. It is hoped that this section will be refreshing, inspiring and address common misconceptions held about children, discipline and punishment.

This publication has been produced with the financial support of the European Union through the Social Citizenship Education Programme (SCE) led by the Pacific Community (SPC) Human Rights and Social Development Division (HRSD) under the Pacific Partnership to End Violence Against Women and Girls Programme (Pacific Partnership). Its content is the sole responsibility of SPC and UNICEF Pacific and can in no way be taken to reflect the views of the European Union and others under the Pacific Partnership.

The Pacific Community's (SPC)'s Social Citizenship Education programme, as part of the Pacific Partnership to End Violence Against Women and Girls (Pacific Partnership), equips school students and communities to understand and apply human rights and responsibilities, gender equality, inclusion and non-violence. The Pacific Partnership is funded primarily by the European Union, and the Governments of Australia and New Zealand, and UN Women, and is led by the Pacific Community (SPC), UN Women and the Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat.



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#### Pacific Partnership to End Violence against Women and Girls Programme





## About the videos

### Target Audience

Teachers, parents, school-age children and community members, with the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports as a key stakeholder. The goal is to show the video to the general public, communities and families.

### Overall Objective

To assist in the transition away from corporal punishment in schools by educating teachers, parents, school-age children and community members on Tuvaluan laws with regards to corporal punishment and its harmful effects on children, and providing alternative methods of guiding children and behaviour management in classrooms.

### Video 1 (Child Protection Laws and Policies) Objective

To guide Tuvaluan teachers and school stakeholders in carrying out their obligations to provide a safe environment for children in schools and in the community in accordance with Tuvalu child protection laws and policies.

### Video 2 (Positive Approaches to Behaviour Management) Objective

To empower school stakeholders to effectively use non-physical behaviour management approaches in the classroom.

### Learning Objectives:

- Identify the negative effects of corporal punishment and its impact on children
- Identify problem behaviours among children
- Identify alternatives to corporal punishment
- Identify the benefits of positive methods of behaviour management
- Apply what the Bible says about the treatment of children
- Demonstrate abilities to protect children
- Identify and apply child rights in the classroom
- Identify where children can seek help

## Reflection Sessions:

It is important to provide a forum for teachers, parents, school-age children and community members to reflect on and discuss the videos. This can be done in a series of separate sessions with separate groups of teachers, parents, school-age children and community members.

In each of these separate groups, the conversations may be similar or different to varying degrees as the participants process the video content.

Session facilitators should be trained to understand the content of the videos, as well as this guidance document, to ensure they can effectively lead teachers, parents, school-age children and community members in question and answer (Q&A) sessions related to each of the two videos.

It is recommended that session facilitators use the following approach:

- Provide some context for the video. Explain that the Government of Tuvalu wants children to grow up to be happy, healthy and good role models. To accomplish this, the government has ended the use of corporal punishment in schools in order to support children's rights and development, allowing children to learn in a safe environment. This may feel like a big change, but the banning of corporal punishment in schools will lead school teachers and administrators to identify and develop non-physical behaviour management approaches that they can use to guide children.
- Show the video.
- Lead the group in a Q&A session using the video content questions provided in this guidance document.



# Foreword

In 2016, parliament repealed the clause in the Education Act that allowed the principal to impose corporal punishment in schools. Of course, the majority of the Tuvalu population disagreed with the banning of corporal punishment as they saw this as a breach of their roles as parents and even as teachers. Though the general population of Tuvalu did not approve of repealing this clause from the Education Act, the government felt it was safer and right to ban corporal punishment in schools.

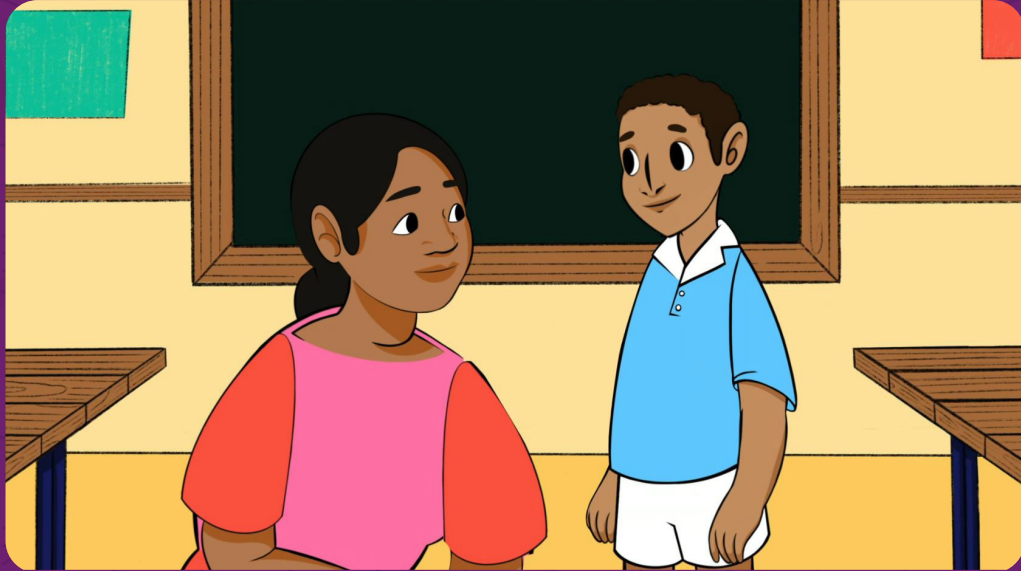


The mismatch of worldviews regarding corporal punishment between the general population and the government was an issue of interest. Hence, the biggest challenge we are facing now is the barrier between law and practice. There is a need to bridge this discrepancy, as this barrier impacts our education system, particularly students' learning.

I believe that the Education Department should spearhead the provision of awareness programmes that may help our Tuvaluan people to understand the important triangular linkage between corporal punishment, students' learning, and students' wellbeing/health. We need a holistic approach that allows all stakeholders to identify possible ways/strategies that teachers and parents may use to prevent them from using corporal punishment in schools and homes. We do this for the sake of our children's safety and learning in schools.

It is a tough call and task, so we need a collective effort for this campaign. This handbook is just one way to start this campaign.

**Dr Tufoua Panapa – CEO Ministry of Education Youth & Sports**



# Video 1:

## Child Protection Laws and Policies Questions

# Video 1: Child Protection

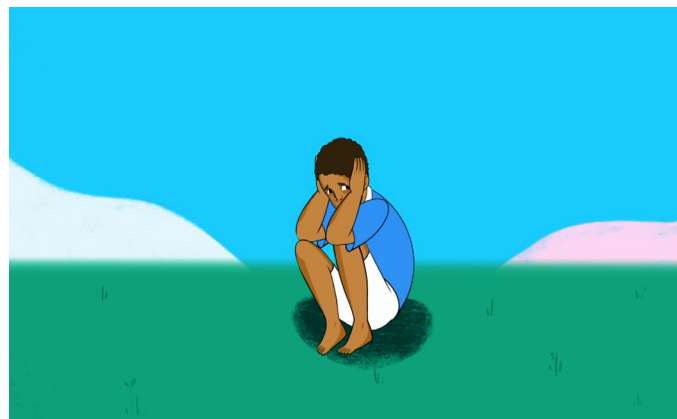
## Laws and Policies Questions

### What happened to Esala in the classroom?

The teacher punished Esala using corporal punishment. The teacher hit Esala with a ruler across his hands. This caused serious pain and hurt Esala.

### Why did the teacher hit Esala? What did Esala do that led to the teacher's reaction?

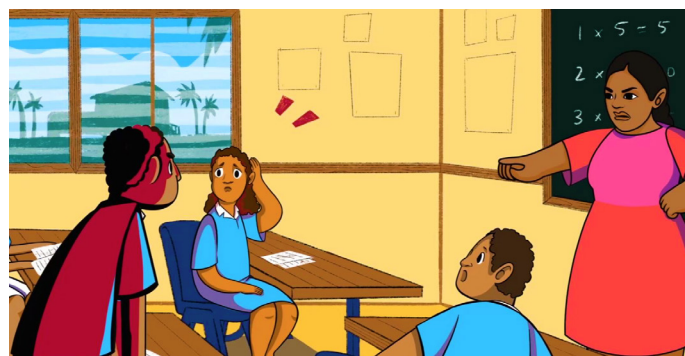
The teacher hit Esala because he had behaved disrespectfully towards teachers and other children in the classroom. Esala often swears, fights with other children, and makes fun of his classmates and teachers.



### Why was Esala being disrespectful?

Esala behaves disrespectfully in the classroom because he is afraid. Esala is afraid because he lives in a home where he and his mother experience violence and abuse at the hands of his father. Esala often has to hide from his father because he becomes angry and hurts him and his mother through the use of physical violence.

Esala carries the weight of his home environment. Esala struggles to manage his emotions, leading to difficult behaviours in the classroom. Esala has also learned bad behaviours – disrespect, aggression and physical violence – from his father. Esala displays the bad behaviours that he has learned from his father in the classroom with his teachers and other children.



Because the teacher does not know that Esala is afraid, the teacher has a difficult time understanding Esala's bad behaviours.

### What are some challenges that Esala and other children face that can lead them to misbehave?

Like Esala, many children can struggle to manage their emotions, leading to difficult behaviours in the classroom. Feelings are hard to see.



Some children have difficulties at home. For instance, they may be exposed to domestic violence or abuse, or be neglected. They may have a parent or family member who abuses alcohol or drugs. Children may experience the loss or death of a parent or family member, or their family may be facing economic hardship.

Some children are bullied by their peers or other children in the school or community. They can also be bullied by a family member, such as a sibling.

Some children may have health problems that can lead them to misbehave. These health problems could be physical or emotional. Other children struggle with issues we cannot see.



## Did the teacher achieve her objective by hitting Esala?

No. Before using physical or corporal punishment, teachers must think about the consequences of this action and the negative effects of corporal punishment on children.

## What was the effect on Esala of being hit by the teacher?

Esala felt bad, alone and did not know where to get help. Corporal punishment only teaches fear.

Across the world, the use of corporal punishment is associated with poor outcomes for children and issues later in life, such as: low school attendance, unemployment, bullying behaviours, criminal behaviours, and the use of violence against family and the community.

## What are the benefits of teaching children with positive approaches?

While disciplining children is important, the use of non-physical, positive approaches allows teachers to teach children how to make positive life choices and to consider the impact of their behaviour on others.

This approach requires teachers to talk to children in a positive way, using a proper voice, language and behaviours. For instance, teachers can correct children's behaviours with positive communication and clear directions to limit misunderstandings. For example, do not tell children "don't run"; rather, tell them "let's walk." Children will respect teachers if they use positive communication and reward them for behaviours that meet expectations. Rewards can be verbal, such as telling children "good job" or "nice team work."



## How can teachers teach and instruct children in keeping with the Bible?

In Tuvalu, all teachers need to be ready to teach and instruct children in keeping with the Bible. This means teaching children the fruit of the Spirit – to know how to love, care for, forgive and trust others. The best way to teach children about the fruit of the Spirit is to be a role model. Children will learn as they watch teachers interact with them, and others in the classroom, in a positive way. Teachers can show children kindness, patience, self-control and respect, and teach them by demonstrating through their own behaviours, the behaviours they want to see in children.

When children are taught in this way, they will remember these experiences when they grow up and carry them forward in their lives and in interactions with family members and others in the community. Rules and boundaries should be set in a positive way for children.



# Video 2:

## Positive Approaches to Behaviour Management Questions



# Video 2: Positive Approaches to Behaviour Management Questions

## Why did the Government of Tuvalu end the use of corporal punishment in schools?

The Government of Tuvalu wants children to grow up to be happy, healthy and good role models. To accomplish this, the government has ended the use of corporal punishment in schools in order to support children's development and allow them to learn in a safe environment. This may feel like a big change, but ending corporal punishment in schools will lead teachers to identify positive methods of discipline that they can use to teach and guide students towards good behaviours.

The Government of Tuvalu ended the use of corporal punishment in schools because they recognized that exposure to harsh punishment and discipline can create fear, uncertainty and other negative feelings in children, and can lead them to engage in antisocial, aggressive and destructive behaviours. Knowing this, the government recognised that children need extra protection and care while growing up.

## How can teachers provide positive guidance to encourage good behaviours among children in the classroom?

In 2018, the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports asked teachers in Tuvalu to share some of the positive approaches to behaviour management they have found effective in their classrooms. The video identifies 7 positive approaches that teachers in Tuvalu have identified as useful.

Positive approaches teach children how to manage their feelings and make good choices, and also understand why respecting rules and boundaries are important. Positive approaches of guiding children can help them to grow up to be strong and healthy, which is a benefit to everyone.

## How can teachers redirect children's behaviours?

Teachers can encourage children to use their imagination to redirect their behaviours. Teachers can ask children to close their eyes and pretend they are flying like an airplane, imagining what they see while flying, such as clouds and birds, and far below, the earth and sea. Or they can ask children to close their eyes and pretend they are swimming deep down in the sea, imagining what they see while swimming, such as fish, sharks, whales and reefs. This approach helps a child and the class calm down and become more focused.

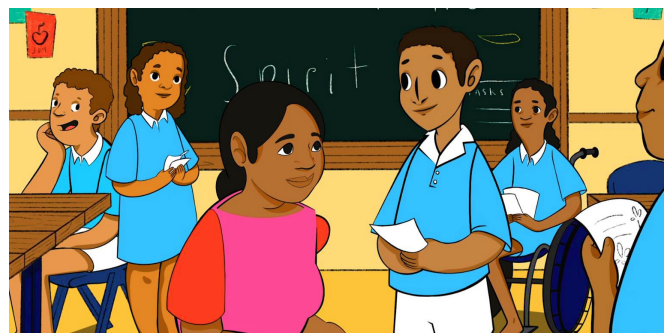
Teachers can provide a child with alternative tasks to redirect their behaviours. Teachers can provide a child with a different task to do, distracting them from the current challenge or problem behaviour that they are exhibiting.

Teachers can provide a child a safe space in the room where they can go to calm down. In this safe space, children should have access to books or other materials to read, and educational materials to keep them occupied. Teachers should encourage a child to return to the classroom once they have calmed down and feel better.



## How can teachers encourage good behaviours in children?

Teachers should encourage good behaviours in children. Teachers should recognise and comment on children's positive behaviours, while looking for ways to encourage all children. Rewards and positive reinforcement can be the best motivator for children, including children who typically demonstrate challenging behaviours in the classroom.



## How can teachers communicate differently with children?

Teachers can communicate with children at eye level. Teachers can sit next to or across from the child so that they are at eye level with them. Teachers can communicate with the child in a calm manner, explaining why their behaviour was not appropriate and what behaviour is appropriate for the child in that situation or setting.



## Do teachers need to use different teaching methods to encourage good behaviours in children?

Teachers should try different teaching styles. If children seem bored or uninterested in the subject matter or content, teachers can consider delivering teaching materials in a different way. Teachers can find ways to involve children in role play, class discussion, debates, drama or singing to learn the subject matter. These different teaching styles work best when teachers can create opportunities for children to interact with each other and be active in their lessons.

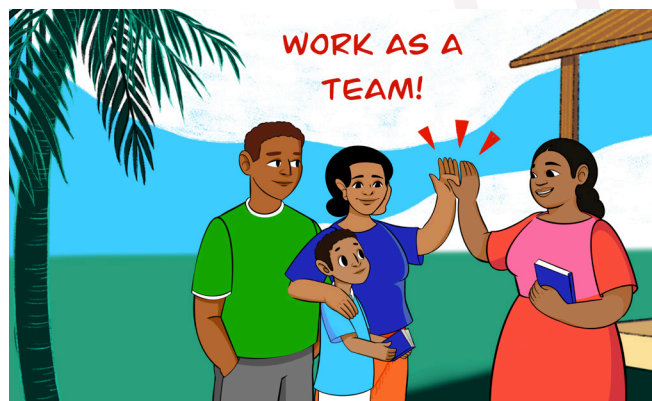


## How can teachers work together with parents to address a child's behaviour?

Teachers should recognise the benefits of working as a team, and recognise the importance of having a child's parents or caregivers on that team. Teachers should consider involving a child's parents if they think the child's family could help with ideas or strategies for supporting good behaviour in the classroom. Working as a team with parents requires two-way communication and working together in the same direction to support a child's good behaviour.

## Who else can teachers work with to develop positive approaches for encouraging good behaviours in the classroom?

Teachers can work with each other and share effective positive approaches that can be successfully used in classrooms. Teachers should also work with the Education Department to identify and share positive approaches for guiding children and managing classroom behaviours, as well as for working as a team with parents. Community leaders can play an important role in supporting school



## What happened to Esala in the classroom?

The teacher punished Esala using corporal punishment. The teacher hit Esala with a ruler across his hands. This caused serious pain and hurt Esala.

## Why did the teacher hit Esala? What did Esala do that led to the teacher's reaction?

The teacher hit Esala because he behaved disrespectfully in the classroom to teachers and other children. Esala often swears, fights with other children, and makes fun of his classmates and teachers.

teachers and administrators to communicate changes in schools to the rest of the community. They can also help to support teachers working with children in difficult and vulnerable situations. Teachers may need to refer children and their families living in difficult and vulnerable situations to support services.

Schools, parents and community leaders need to work together to ensure that children have the opportunity to grow and develop into all they were created to be!

## What is corporal punishment?

Corporal punishment is “any punishment in which physical force is used and intended to cause some degree of pain or discomfort, however light. Most involves hitting, smacking, slapping or spanking children with the hand or with an implement.”

Other common forms of corporal punishment include:

- Pinching, pulling, twisting
- Beatings using different objects (sticks, rulers, paddles, belts or other hard objects)
- Forcing a child to consume an unpleasant substance, such as soap, hot sauce or hot pepper
- Forcing a child to sit or stand in an uncomfortable position or in the sun, rain or heat for a prolonged period of time

There are also non-physical forms of punishment that are considered cruel and degrading. These include harsh words that belittle, humiliate, denigrate, scapegoat, threaten, scare or ridicule the child.

## Where do children experience corporal punishment?

Corporal punishment is most often used on children by adults in the home and at school. In the home, parents and other family members may use corporal punishment to discipline and control children. Similarly, in schools, teachers and administrators may use corporal punishment to discipline and control children.

**Corporal punishment is no longer allowed in schools in Tuvalu!**



## Why was Esala being disrespectful?

Esala behaves disrespectfully in the classroom because he is afraid. Esala is afraid because he lives in a home where he and his mother experience violence and abuse at the hands of his father. Esala often has to hide from his father because he becomes angry and hurts him and his mother through the use of physical violence.

Esala carries the weight of his home environment. Esala struggles to manage his emotions, leading to difficult behaviours in the classroom. Esala has also learned bad behaviours – disrespect, aggression and physical violence – from his father. Esala displays the bad behaviours that he has learned from his father in the classroom with his teachers and other children.

Because the teacher does not know that Esala is afraid, the teacher has a difficult time understanding Esala's bad behaviours.

## What are some challenges that Esala and other children face that can lead them to misbehave?

Like Esala, many children can struggle to manage their emotions, leading to difficult behaviours in the classroom. Feelings are hard to see.

Some children have difficulties at home. For instance, they may be exposed to domestic violence or abuse, or be neglected. They may have a parent or family member who abuses alcohol or drugs. Children may experience the loss or death of a parent or family member, or their family may be facing economic hardship.

Some children are bullied by their peers or other children in the school or community. They can also be bullied by a family member, such as a sibling.

Some children may have health problems that can lead them to misbehave. These health problems could be physical or emotional. Other children struggle with issues we cannot see.

## What are the causes of a child's poor behaviour in the classroom?

### What are the negative effects of domestic violence on children?

Children are frequently the forgotten victims of domestic violence, yet they often witness or are aware of it when it occurs in the home because they hear the yelling and arguments, see the injuries, and see the damage to property.

Children who grow up in violent homes are more likely to experience child abuse and neglect. Children of all ages, but particularly young children, are vulnerable to domestic violence and can be injured either directly or indirectly by the violence in the home.

Even if children are not the direct victims of domestic violence, they often suffer the same behavioural, emotional or psychological problems as children who experience it directly.

Children exposed to violence and abuse in the home often suffer physical, social and developmental problems, such as learning problems and limited social skills. Some children also have severe anxiety or nervousness and suffer from depression. Children who experience domestic violence may also act out in class and misbehave. Some children exhibit violent, risky or delinquent behaviours and may bully their classmates or disrupt the classroom.

### Does fear teach children to react negatively?

When we sense danger, our survival instincts kick in and we respond by either hiding, running away or fighting back. If you punish children for their unwanted behaviour by scaring them, it doesn't mean that you are helping them to become a better person, it just means you are scaring them into acting the way you want them to act.

If respect is what you are after, then fear will not get you that. Respect has to be earned. Fear will not help to develop children's self-esteem; it will only make them retreat or fight back. Positive approaches allow teachers to reinforce children's good behaviours and stop bad behaviours, all while maintaining respect and without having the children fear you.

Teachers are mentors, and when a child fears you, they will no longer come to you for guidance and support. A positive approach teaches children to make better choices, which in turn will help the child.

## Did the teacher achieve her objective by hitting Esala?

No. Before using physical or corporal punishment, teachers must think about the consequences of this action and the negative effects of corporal punishment on children.

## What was the effect on Esala of being hit by the teacher?

Esala felt bad, alone and did not know where to get help. Corporal punishment only teaches fear.

Across the world the use of corporal punishment is associated with poor outcomes for children and issues later in life, such as: low school attendance, unemployment, bullying behaviours, criminal behaviours and the use of violence against family and the community.

## What are the negative effects of corporal punishment on children?

### Is corporal punishment harmful to children?

Corporal punishment is always degrading and harmful to children! Corporal punishment has negative impacts on children, including:

- Physical injuries (and in most severe cases, even death)
- Psychological and emotional harm
- Declining self-worth or self-esteem
- Fear, stress, anxiety, depression and panic
- Negative effects on a child's brain development
- Anti-social or aggressive behaviours and bullying
- Poor performance at school
- Low levels of classroom participation
- Avoiding school or dropping out for fear of being beaten
- Fear of teachers and school

## Does corporal punishment make bad behaviours worse?

Corporal punishment can lead to obedience and immediate behaviour change in a child, but only in the short-term. Research shows that hitting and spanking quickly lose their effectiveness. When children are spanked, they don't learn how to make better choices. Eventually, spanking stops being a deterrent.

Research shows that over the long-term, corporal punishment is not effective and may even cause behaviour problems in children that worsen over time. For instance, spanking children increases aggressive behaviour in them. Research has found that children who are spanked are more likely to hit other people. The reason behind this is simple – corporal punishment teaches children aggressive behaviour, which teaches children to solve problems with violence.

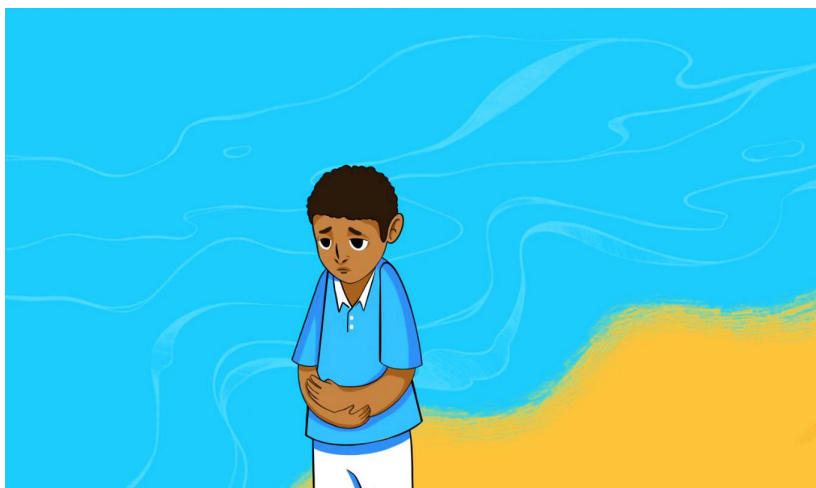
Corporal punishment can also lead to bullying, dating violence and other problem behaviours that rely on having power over another person.

Corporal punishment also damages the relationship between a child and their abuser, whether the abuser is a school teacher, parent or caregiver. Trust, safety and security are important for helping children develop the skills they need to manage their behaviour. Corporal punishment damages this trust and leads children to feel unsafe and insecure.

## How do adults justify the use of corporal punishment?

Corporal punishment remains a widely used discipline technique in families and schools, but it is also the subject of controversy within the child development and psychological communities. Some adults attempt to justify the use of corporal punishment with statements such as, "I was hit or beaten as a child by my parents and teachers and turned out just fine." In order to end the use of corporal punishment, such justifications need to be confronted.

Today, there is a large body of literature that documents the negative effects of corporal punishment and the negative outcomes for children, including aggressiveness, delinquency and mental health problems. For one, corporal punishment on its own does not teach children right from wrong. Second, although corporal punishment makes children afraid to disobey when parents are present, while parents are not present to administer the punishment, those same children will misbehave. A growing body of evidence indicates that corporal punishment does no good and may even cause harm. For these reasons, researchers, clinicians and psychologists recommend against using corporal punishment.<sup>1</sup>



## What are the myths and realities of corporal punishment?

Myths are widely held beliefs that are actually false or incorrect ideas that are not grounded in reality. The box below reveals two common myths related to corporal punishment, alongside the reality or truth, which is based upon facts.

### Myths and Realities of Corporal Punishment

Myth	Reality
<b>Myth 1:</b> The use of corporal punishment in schools is an effective way to discipline children, gain respect from them, and teach them how to develop into responsible adults.	<b>Reality 1:</b> Research has shown the use of corporal punishment in schools leads to a series of detrimental effects, including: poor academic performance; low levels of classroom participation; children avoiding school or dropping out for fear of getting beaten; declining self-worth or self-esteem; and fear of teachers and school.
<b>Myth 2:</b> Corporal punishment in schools improves academic performance and corrects bad behaviour.	<b>Reality 2:</b> Many children do not feel that corporal punishment helps them learn or to behave properly; instead it leaves them scared, confused and sad. Corporal punishment also leaves children feeling unsafe and insecure. Corporal punishment may lead children to become violent due to the normalisation of violence.

<sup>1</sup> Is Corporal Punishment an Effective Means of Discipline, American Psychological Association, 2020. Retrieved from: <https://www.apa.org/news/press/releases/2002/06/spanking>

## How can teachers teach and instruct children in keeping with the Bible?

In Tuvalu, all teachers need to be ready to teach and instruct children in keeping with the Bible. This means teaching children the fruit of the Spirit – to know how to love, care for, forgive and trust others. The best way to teach children about the fruit of the Spirit is to be a role model. Children will learn as they watch teachers interact with them and others in the classroom in a positive way. Teachers can show children kindness, patience, self-control and respect, and teach them by demonstrating through their own behaviours, the behaviours they want to see in children.

When you teach children in this way, they will remember these experiences when they grow up and carry them forward in their lives and in interactions with family members and others in the community. Rules and boundaries should be set in a positive way for children.

## What does the Bible say about the treatment of children?<sup>2</sup>

Biblical texts encourage protection and care for all children to ensure children develop in a safe and healthy environment in homes, schools, communities, churches and society.<sup>3</sup>

Pacific islanders also have their own traditional proverbs, such as, “It is easier to bend a small tree rather than a grown and mature tree.” This Pacific proverb is similar to Proverbs 22:6, which states, “It is easier to teach and mould a child while they are still young than to wait until they become more mature, more rigid and fixed in their thoughts and actions.”

This teaching explains that if you teach a child properly when they are young, when they grow older, they will never depart from what they learned as a child. Training does not mean spanking, hitting or any other form of physical punishment.<sup>4</sup>



Biblical texts focus on providing tender care when teaching a child, and guarding and protecting children from harm that can prevent them from fulfilling God's plans or intentions for their life. The aim is to empower and encourage a child to reach for and become the person they feel they were called to become. Christian teaching of children is important because children are recognised as the hope and future of the family, community, church and nation.<sup>5</sup>

## What does the Bible say about using “the rod” to punish children?

Corporal punishment is commonly used in families and schools in the Pacific. Too often, however, this has led to child abuse. Adults often quote biblical texts to justify the use of corporal punishment on children. Many adults refer to two Proverbs: 1) Proverbs 13:24 which states, “Those who spare the rod hate their children, but those who love them are diligent to discipline them”; and 2) Proverbs 14:3, which states, “The talk of fools is a rod for their back, but the lips of the wise preserve them.” Many people understand “the rod” in Proverbs 13:24 and 14:3 to mean correcting behaviour or providing wisdom through forms of physical punishment and discipline, such as spanking, or using objects like sticks and belts. Many adults have interpreted “the rod” literally. However, in Proverbs 13:24 and 14:3 “the rod” means that of a shepherd. From this perspective, the shepherd's rod is to re-direct sheep, to make sure the sheep remain within the herd or sheepfold, to provide protection for the sheep from danger, and to guide sheep to where they can enjoy greener, healthier pastures and plenty of streams for water. “The rod” is for protection, not to be used for punishment or abuse.

Along with other proverbs and teachings, Proverbs 13:24 and 14:3 teach using illustrations and figurative language. Hence, these proverbs do not mean that corporal punishment is the only means for correcting children's behaviours, but encourage teaching children through guidance and appropriate discipline. “Spare the rod and spoil the child” actually means to guide children in their development and the proper ways to behave. The word “rod” is used metaphorically, but does not imply discipline by means of

<sup>2</sup> Bird, S. Child Protection and Care: A Critical Pathway into our Future. Uniting World, p. 20.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid.

<sup>4</sup>Ibid.

<sup>5</sup>Ibid.



corporal punishment. There are effective and positive forms of discipline that can be used by adults to help children to develop, internalise rules and acquire appropriate behaviours.

## How can adults teach and instruct children in keeping with the Bible?

In Tuvalu, parents and teachers need to be ready to teach and instruct children in keeping with the Bible. This means teaching children the fruit of the Spirit; i.e. the character virtues and values to know how to love, care for, forgive, and trust others. Fruit of the Spirit also include teaching children to be joyful, patient, kind, good, faithful and gentle, and to have self-control.\*



The best way to teach children about the fruit of the Spirit is to be a role model. Children will learn as they watch parents interact with them and their family members in a positive, loving and caring way. In addition, children will learn as they watch teachers interact with them and others in the classroom in a positive and caring way. Both parents and teachers can show children joy, peace, kindness, goodness, patience, self-control and respect.

On a daily basis, parents and teachers should demonstrate the fruit of the Spirit in their own behaviours to model the behaviours they want to see in children. When children are taught in this way, they will remember these experiences when they grow up and carry them forward in their lives and in interactions with family members and others in the community. When children grow up, they themselves will someday become parents, so it is important that they are prepared to model and teach the fruit of the Spirit to their own children.

Both parents and teachers should set rules and boundaries in a positive way for children. This requires the use of non-violent forms of discipline, or positive methods of discipline, that teach children lessons, lead to wisdom, and support each child to grow into the person that God created them to be.

\*Galatians 5:22-23

But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control. Against such things there is no law.

## How can teachers encourage good behaviours in children?

Teachers should encourage good behaviour in children. Teachers should recognise and comment on children's positive behaviours, while looking for ways to encourage all children. Rewards and positive reinforcement can be the best motivator for children, including children who typically demonstrate challenging behaviours in the classroom.

## Do teachers need to use different teaching methods to encourage good behaviours in children?

Teachers should try different teaching styles. If children seem bored or uninterested in the subject matter or content, teachers can consider delivering teaching materials in a different way. Teachers can find ways to involve children in role play, class discussion, debates, drama or singing to learn the subject matter. These different teaching styles work best if teachers can create opportunities for children to interact with each other and be active in their lessons.

## What are positive methods of discipline that work with children?

Discipline should not be about physically punishing or controlling children! Instead, discipline should be about teaching and guiding children to control themselves and manage their emotions, behaviours and impulses. It is best to use approaches that help children to learn from their mistakes, while also cultivating better decision-making skills. Fostering better decision-making skills among children can help them to make better choices in the future.

## What are positive approaches to disciplining children?



There are non-physical, positive approaches that parents and teachers can use to guide children and manage their behaviours at home and in the classroom. Teachers can use these approaches in the classroom to deal with misbehaving children.

Positive approaches are effective because they allow children to learn and adapt to the expectations set by parents and teachers. Positive approaches also allow parents and teachers to focus on reward for and reinforcement of children's good behaviours.

Whenever teachers start to use a new approach in the classroom, they will likely have a few naysayers or pessimists. These are often parents, teachers and community elders who were brought up thinking positive discipline means being "too soft" on children. They were brought up thinking that children need to be scared and physically punished in order to behave properly. This thinking is incorrect!

In today's classrooms, many teachers try to open the minds of their children and teach them to make good choices and decisions which will help them succeed in school and later in life. Teachers focus attention on the positives of each unique child and reward them for the good choices they make in the classroom in an effort to reinforce those good choices and good behaviours.

## How can teachers provide positive guidance to encourage good behaviours among children in the classroom?

In 2018, the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports asked teachers in Tuvalu to share some of the positive approaches to behaviour management they have found effective in their classrooms. Video 2 identifies 7 positive approaches that teachers in Tuvalu have identified as useful.

Positive approaches teach children how to manage their feelings and make good choices, and also understand why respecting rules and boundaries is important. Positive approaches of guiding children can help children to grow up to be strong and healthy, which is a benefit to everyone.

## How can teachers redirect children's behaviours?

Teachers can encourage children to use their imagination to redirect their behaviours. Teachers can ask children to close their eyes and pretend they are flying like an aeroplane, imagining what they see while flying. This approach helps a child and the class calm down and become more focused.

Teachers can provide a child with alternative tasks to redirect their behaviours. Teachers can provide a child with a different task to do, distracting them from the current challenge or problem behaviour that they are exhibiting.

Teachers can provide a child a safe space in the room where they can go to calm down. In this safe space, children should have access to books or other materials to read, and educational materials to keep them occupied. Teachers should encourage a child to return to the classroom once they have calmed down and feel better.

## Are there positive approaches for encouraging and reinforcing good behaviours in children?

A good parent always has a good plan for managing their children's behaviour in the home and family. The same can be said about teachers; a good teacher always has a good plan for managing children's behaviours in the classroom. There are positive approaches that parents and teachers can use to encourage and reinforce good behaviours in children. These approaches have been proven to be more effective than using physical or corporal punishment.

Below are 10 different positive approaches that parents and teachers can use to encourage and reinforce good behaviours in children. These positive approaches are examples of good practices used in classrooms and schools by teachers. These positive approaches can also be used by parents in the home and family.

1. **Encourage good behaviour in children** – Teachers should recognise and comment on children's positive behaviours; that is, behaviours observed in the classroom that meet expectations. Rewards and positive reinforcement can be the best motivator for children, including children who typically are difficult to deal with or behave poorly in the classroom. Rewards can be verbal praise (such as "good girl/boy", "nice job" or "good team work"), special privileges (such as extra free time, a star on the board, or the opportunity to choose the book the teacher will read to the class that day) and monetary rewards (such as a free pencil). Rewards can help keep good behaviour on track and build self-esteem.
2. **Discipline with dignity** – All children need to be treated with dignity. Even when a child is being disciplined, they need to be treated with dignity. Private reminders and private talks with the child about their behaviour will preserve their dignity, as well as yours as the adult and teacher. One of the best things to remember when disciplining a child is that they win when they get you (the adult) to "lose your cool." Take your time when children "push your buttons" and decide carefully on your response. In this way, you will not behave in a way that you will regret later.
3. **Calm reminder** – A calm reminder can help children understand what they are supposed to do. The calm reminder should be done in a way that does not communicate negative emotions. A calm reminder can be "let's walk, not run", "let's be quiet while we read, let's not talk", "let's plan to return from lunch on time, let's not be late."
4. **Communicate with children at eye level** – A teacher can sit next to or across from the child so that they are at eye level with them. Then the teacher can communicate with the child in a calm manner, explaining why their behaviour was not appropriate and what behaviour is appropriate for the child in that situation or setting.

## How can teachers communicate differently with children?

Teachers can communicate with children at eye level. Teachers can sit next to or across from them so that they are at eye level with the child and can communicate with them in a calm manner, explaining why their behaviour was not appropriate and what behaviour is appropriate for the child in that situation or setting.

By redirecting a child's energy, a teacher can end the misbehaviour without creating negative feelings. Instead of focusing on the misbehaviour, this strategy allows the teacher to turn children's attention to something else, something worth attending to. This is a useful approach when direct confrontation with a child is not necessary or is unwise.

5. **Encourage children to use their imagination** – Teachers can ask children to close their eyes and pretend they are flying like an aeroplane, imagining what they see while flying, such as clouds, planes and birds, and far below, the earth and sea. Or they can ask children to close their eyes and pretend they are swimming in the lagoon or ocean, imagining what they see while swimming, such as coral, shells, fish, sharks, whales and boats. This approach helps a child and the class calm down and become more focused.
6. **Provide children with alternative tasks** – Teachers can provide children with alternative tasks to redirect their behaviours. Teachers can provide a child with a different task to do, distracting them from the current challenge or problem behaviour that they are exhibiting.
7. **Provide a child with a safe space in the room** – Teachers can provide a child with a safe space in the room where they can go to calm down. In this safe space, a child should have access to books to read or educational materials or art supplies to keep them occupied. Teachers should encourage a child to return to the larger group of children once they have calmed down and feel better.
8. **Exercise Break** – As a teacher, one of the best things you can do for children and yourself when children seem unable to concentrate is to take an exercise break. A good time for an exercise break is about 45 minutes before lunch. Take your children outside for 5–7 minutes of exercise led first by the teacher, and then once they know the routine, a child can lead the other children (this can be a reward for good behaviour). This is not to replace physical education, but is a quick chance to do some specific physical activity when children need it most. Another variation of this is to use low-impact exercise for children in the classroom.
9. **Try different teaching styles** – If children seem bored or uninterested in the subject matter, teachers can consider delivering teaching materials in a different way. Teachers can find ways to involve children in role play, class discussion, debates, dramas or singing to learn the subject matter. These different teaching styles work best when teachers can create opportunities for children to interact with each other and be active in their lessons.
10. **Work as a team** - Teachers should recognise the benefits of working as a team and recognise the importance of having a child's parents or caregivers on that team. Teachers should consider involving a child's parents or caregivers if they think the child's family could help with ideas or strategies for supporting their child's good behaviour in the classroom. Working as a team with parents requires two-way communication and working together in the same direction to support a child's good behaviour.





## What other positive approaches have you found to be successful or effective in encouraging good behaviour in children?

Community leaders can play an important role in supporting teachers to communicate changes in schools to the rest of the community. They can also help to support teachers working with children in difficult and vulnerable situations. Teachers may need to refer children and their families living in difficult and vulnerable situations to support services.

For a useful guide on how to communicate with children in classrooms to encourage good behaviours, see Annex A – Tell Me What to Do Instead (Classroom Version).<sup>6</sup>

## What are the benefits of teaching children with positive approaches?

While disciplining children is important, the use of non-physical, positive approaches allows teachers to teach children how to make positive life choices and to consider the impact of their behaviour on others.

This approach requires teachers to talk to children in a positive way, using a proper voice, language and behaviours. For instance, teachers can correct children's behaviours with positive communication and clear directions to limit misunderstandings. For example, do not tell children "don't run"; rather, tell them "let's walk." Children will respect teachers if they use positive communication and reward children for behaviours that meet expectations. Rewards can be verbal, such as telling children "good job" or "nice team work."

## Who can teachers work with to develop positive approaches for encouraging good behaviours in children?

Teachers can work with each other and share positive approaches for encouraging good behaviours in children. Teachers should also work with the Education Department to identify and share positive approaches that work.

## What are the benefits of using positive methods of discipline?

Positive methods of discipline are a proven way for parents and teachers to deal with children who misbehave. Many teachers choose to use positive approaches to discipline in the classroom because they feel it allows children to learn and adapt to the expectations that they set for children. These approaches also allow teachers to focus on children's good behaviours.



The advantage of positive approaches is that they can be used to teach children to make better choices, which in turn helps children to succeed in school.

When a teacher focuses on something positive, they are more likely to get positive results from children. When a teacher focuses on the negative, more negative things are likely to happen.

When teachers have high expectations of children, then children are more likely to try to meet those expectations. When teachers place low expectations on them, children are more likely to match those low expectations and underperform.

Positive approaches to teaching children are worth it! Positive approaches teach children logic and that they can succeed and achieve if they put their mind to it. A child who has self-worth is a child whose behaviour will meet your expectations.

When children make a mistake or misbehave, teachers can help children learn from their mistakes. Teachers can help children think about their choices and what effect their choices have on the outcome. This approach helps children understand the cause and effect of the choices and decisions they make. Positive approaches help children understand the logic and reasoning behind their actions.

<sup>6</sup> Retrieved from: <https://cainclusion.org/teachingpyramid/classroom-mod1-building-relationships/tell-me-what-to-do-instead-classroom-version-pdf/>



**Did you ever get a reward for a job well done? Do you ever get special treat for making a good choice? If yes, how did that make you feel?**

When someone rewards you for making a good choice or doing a good job, that is a form of positive discipline. They are reassuring you that you made a good choice or a good decision.

## Is it good to reward children?

The goal for many teachers is to get children to be motivated to learn and to behave properly in the classroom. Reward can be a good motivator for children. Positive approaches focus on encouraging good behaviours in children. Teachers should use language that gives children the chance to think about their actions and choices. For example, you don't tell a child they are "bad," but you say their "actions are not a good choice."

Every day children make choices and when teachers use a positive approach in the classroom, they allow children to modify the choices they make so that they can feel good about them, such as the choice to follow the rules, behave properly and listen carefully to the lessons.

The goal of using positive approaches is to produce children who can think critically and make good choices and decisions on their own. It also allows children to learn and adapt their behaviours to meet the teacher's expectations. By teaching children in a positive way to make better choices, teachers can lead children on the path to success.

A good teacher is never without a good plan for managing children's behaviours in the classroom. Positive approaches can go a long way in teaching children to know how to love, care for, forgive and trust others. Those are fruit of the Spirit. The best way to teach children about the fruit of the Spirit is to be a role model. Children will learn as they watch teachers interact with them, and others in the classroom, in a positive way. Teachers can show children kindness, patience, self-control and respect; demonstrating through their own behaviours, the behaviours they want to see in children.

## How can teachers work together with parents to address a child's behaviour?

Teachers should recognise the benefits of working as a team, and recognise the importance of having a child's parents or caregivers on that team. Teachers should consider involving a child's parents if they think the child's family could help with ideas or strategies for supporting good behaviour in the classroom. Working as a team with parents requires two-way communication and working together in the same direction to support a child's good behaviour.

## How can teachers work with parents to address a child's behaviour?

Teachers need to create a supportive environment for all children and parents to talk about their child's education and development. Positive parent-teacher relationships contribute to children's success in school. Communicating well is a key factor for making the teacher-parent relationship work.

Communication on both sides is extremely important. Parents need information about how their child is behaving and developing, and what they are learning in the classroom. Teachers need important feedback from parents about children's progress when it comes to learning and social development, and the challenges they are facing.

Communicating effectively with parents can be challenging for teachers, and communicating effectively with teachers can be challenging for parents.

Some important questions to think about when building a parent-teacher relationship:

- When's the right time to talk?
- How can you get their attention?
- What should you bring up with the parent (or teacher)?
- How do you create a relationship with someone you may only see for a short period of time?
- How do you talk to a parent without coming across the wrong way when talking about their child and their child's behaviours?

## What steps can teachers and parents take to build a good parent-teacher relationship?

- Approach parent-teacher relationships with respect. Treat teacher-parent-child relationships the way you would any other important relationship in your life. Create a problem-solving partnership, instead of a confrontational relationship. Teachers should avoid immediately pointing out what is wrong with a child or parent. Work together to brainstorm and collaborate on ways to help a child, instead of delivering a lecture.
- Children should be encouraged to have their own relationship with their teacher. A teacher may be one of the first relationships a child has with an adult outside of the family. Teachers should recognise and understand their relationship with the child and the parent.
- Teachers should understand that parents may want to brag about or defend their child. Often parents think their child is perfect or brilliant. Teachers should avoid attacking a child's character to their parents. Parents need to trust that the teacher is able to see strengths and positive attributes in their child; no parent wants to hear only negative things about their child. Parents may have insight and understanding of the issues their child is facing in school, and teachers should be prepared to listen. Teachers should be prepared to listen to and talk with parents.
- Remember how you like (or dislike) to be treated by your child's teacher. Reflect on the way you would want to be treated as a parent if they were your child.
- Make efforts to involve both fathers and mothers, and not request to speak to the mother alone. Positive parent-teacher relationships should help children feel good about school and be successful students, and also demonstrate to children that they can trust their teacher, as well as make a child feel like the important people in their life, their teachers and parents, are working together.
- Daily one-on-one consultations between teachers and parents. Communicate with parents on a daily basis when they arrive to drop off and/or pick up their child from school. Find a private space where you can talk to parents where neither the child nor other parents can overhear your conversation. The goal should be to share information about their child's day, including: things their child did during the day, positive experiences their child had, good behaviours their child exhibited, and/or challenges their child faced in the classroom or in their behaviours. Offer helpful advice or tips to parents regarding support they can provide their child to improve learning and/or address behavioural problems. If there are more substantive issues to discuss, set up a parent-teacher conference.





## Why did the Government of Tuvalu end the use of corporal punishment in schools?

The Government of Tuvalu wants children to grow up to be happy, healthy and good role models. To accomplish this, the government has ended the use of corporal punishment in schools to support children's development and allow them to learn in a safe environment. This may feel like a big change, but ending corporal punishment in schools will lead teachers to identify positive methods of discipline that they can use to teach and guide students to have good behaviours.

The Government of Tuvalu ended the use of corporal punishment in schools because they recognised that exposure to harsh punishment and discipline can create fear, uncertainty and other negative feelings in children, and can lead them to engage in antisocial, aggressive and destructive behaviours. Knowing this, the government recognised that children need extra protection and care while growing up.

## What does it mean that children have the right to be protected from violence?

### What is violence?

Violence happens when someone's mind and body are hurt by another person. Because of this, physical violence, verbal abuse and intimidation are included in the definition of violence.

Children and young people should be protected from all forms of violence, including:

- Physical violence
- Physical discipline (corporal punishment)
- Emotional abuse
- Verbal abuse
- Sexual abuse
- All forms of exploitation
- Exposure to violent images
- Exposure to pornographic images

Violence is often committed by persons who are more powerful against those with less power, such as when adults commit acts of violence and abuse against children, and older children commit acts of violence and abuse against younger children. It is important to understand what power is and how it is used or misused in educational settings, families and communities, to commit acts of violence against children. Violence and abuse happen when power is used inappropriately or misused in a way that harms others.

## What is violence against children?

Violence against children includes all forms of physical or mental harm, injury and abuse, neglect or negligent treatment, and maltreatment or exploitation, including sexual abuse.<sup>7</sup>

**Physical violence** includes corporal punishment and all other forms of torture, cruel, inhumane or degrading treatment or punishment, as well as physical bullying by adults or other children. 'Corporal' (or 'physical') punishment is defined as any punishment in which physical force is used and intended to cause some degree of pain or discomfort, however light. Most involve hitting, 'smacking', 'slapping' and 'spanking' children with the hand or with an implement (for example, a whip, stick, belt, shoe or wooden spoon). Corporal punishment can also involve kicking, shaking or throwing children, scratching, pinching, biting, pulling hair or boxing ears, caning, forcing children to stay in uncomfortable positions, burning, scalding, or forced ingestion.<sup>8</sup>

**Mental/Emotional violence** is often described as psychological maltreatment, mental abuse, verbal abuse, emotional abuse or neglect.<sup>9</sup> This can include:

- All forms of persistent harmful interactions with a child;
- Scaring, terrorising and threatening; exploiting and corrupting; spurning and rejecting; isolating, ignoring and favouritism;
- Denying emotional responsiveness; neglecting mental health, medical or educational needs;
- Insults, name-calling, humiliation, belittling, ridiculing and hurting a child's feelings;
- Exposure to domestic violence;
- Placement in solitary confinement, isolation or humiliating or degrading conditions of detention; and
- Psychological bullying and hazing by adults or other children, including via information and communication technologies such

<sup>7</sup> United Nations Children's Fund, *Hidden in Plain Sight: A statistical analysis of violence against children*, UNICEF, New York, 2014. These definitions have been adapted from the United Nations Committee on the Rights of the Child, General Comment No. 13 (2011): The right of the child to freedom from all forms of violence, UN document CRC/C/GC/13, Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, Geneva, 18 April 2011.

<sup>8</sup> Ibid

<sup>9</sup> Ibid



as mobile phones and the internet (known as ‘cyber-bullying’).

**Sexual violence** comprises any sexual activity imposed by an adult on a child against which the child is entitled to protection by criminal law.<sup>10</sup> This includes:

- Inducement or coercion of a child to engage in any unlawful or psychologically harmful sexual activity;
- Use of children in commercial sexual exploitation;
- Use of children in audio or visual images of child sexual abuse and pornography; and
- Child prostitution, sexual slavery, sexual exploitation in travel and tourism, trafficking for purposes of sexual exploitation (within and between countries), the sale of children for sexual purposes, and forced marriage.

**Sexual activities** are also considered abuse when committed against a child by another child if the offender is significantly older than the victim or uses power, threat or other means of pressure. Consensual sexual activities between children are not considered sexual abuse if the children are older than the age limit defined by the State Party.<sup>11</sup>

**Peer bullying** involves unwanted, aggressive behaviour among school-aged children that involves a real or perceived power imbalance. The behaviour is repeated or has the potential to be repeated over time. Bullying includes actions such as making threats, spreading rumours, attacking someone physically or verbally, and excluding someone from a group on purpose.

**Cyber-bullying** is the use of the internet and other technologies to harass, threaten, embarrass or target another child. It includes such behaviours as: showing or sending text messages that are false harsh, mean or cruel; impersonating a victim online or posting personal information, photos or videos designed to hurt or embarrass another child; and creating a fake account, web page, or online persona with the intention to harass or bully another child.

**Extortion** is the criminal offense of unlawfully demanding and obtaining money or property from a child through force or coercion, including with the threat of violence or physical harm.

**Neglect** is the failure to meet children’s physical and psychological needs, protect them from danger or obtain medical, birth registration or other services when those responsible for their care have the means, knowledge and access to services to do so.<sup>12</sup> It includes:

- Physical neglect, for example, failure to protect a child from harm, including through lack of supervision or failure to provide a child with basic necessities, such as adequate food, shelter, clothing and medical care;
- Psychological or emotional neglect involves lack of emotional support and love, chronic inattention, and ‘psychologically unavailable’ caregivers who overlook young children’s cues and signals, and exposure to intimate partner violence or drug or alcohol abuse;
- Neglect of a child’s physical or mental health, such as withholding essential medical care;
- Educational neglect, which is the failure to comply with laws requiring caregivers to secure their children’s education through attendance at school or otherwise; and
- Abandonment.

## What are human rights?

Human rights belong to every person in the world, from birth until death. Human rights are the rights and freedoms that protect us and ensure our basic needs are fulfilled so we can live a decent life together. They refer to certain things we should all be able to access and enjoy, such as the right to freedom of expression, protection from violence, participation in cultural life, and education and health care. Human rights recognise our freedom to make choices about our lives and to develop to our fullest potential as human beings. Human rights apply regardless of where we are from, our ethnicity or gender, what we believe, or how we choose to live our lives.

Human rights are based on values like dignity, fairness, equality, respect and interdependence, which are shared across the Pacific region and in cultures around the world. In this sense, human rights actually work to strengthen and support cultural values.

Human rights are important to all areas of our lives so that we can live a life of dignity and humanity. A peaceful and strong

<sup>10</sup>Ibid

<sup>11</sup>Ibid

<sup>12</sup>Ibid

community is one where everyone is safe, healthy and strong; that is, where all of their human rights are protected. Living in a community where rights are respected is not just good for individuals, but also for communities and society as a whole. Protecting human rights is about contributing to a safer and more prosperous community for everyone. Human rights represent a celebration of life in all its dimensions.

## What are child rights?

Every child under the age of 18 years has rights. Child rights are human rights. These include the human rights of children to associate with parents, live in families and have their basic needs for physical protection, food, education and health care met. Child rights also include access to criminal laws appropriate for the age and development of the child, equal protection of children's rights, and freedom from discrimination on the basis of the child's gender, race, ethnicity, national origin, religion, socio-economic status, disability or other characteristics.

Child rights also include the right to be active participants in their own lives, families, schools and communities, as well as active citizens who can and should express their opinions and views, and meaningfully contribute to decision making. Child rights also give particular attention to the rights of special protection and care afforded to all children.



Child rights allow children to live their lives to their fullest potential, regardless of their gender or nationality. Every child around the world has the same rights.

### What is the difference between rights, needs and wants?

What is a right?	What is a need?	What is a want?
The things that allow children to live to their fullest potential.	Things that are absolutely necessary for all children to have, or to be able to do, to live a happy and healthy life.	The things that are nice to have but are not necessary for a full life.

## What is the history of child rights nationally and internationally?

Below is a timeline of the history of child rights, both nationally and internationally.

1924	1959	1979	1989
Geneva Convention on the Rights of the Child adopted by the League of Nations.	Declaration on the Rights of the Child adopted by the United Nations.	International Year of the Child	United Nations adopted the <i>Convention on the Rights of the Child</i> .
1990	1995	1999	2002
World Summit for Children held at the United Nations.	Government of Tuvalu ratified the <i>UN Convention on the Rights of the Child</i> .	International Labour Organization adopted the <i>Worse Forms of Child Labour Convention No. 182</i> .	United Nations Special Session on Children results in <i>A World Fit for Children</i> .
2004	2007	2009	2019
<i>Launch of A World Fit for Children</i> .	Commemorative high-level meeting to follow up on outcomes of the United Nations Special Session on Children.	20th Anniversary of the <i>United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child</i> .	30th Anniversary of the <i>United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Children</i> . Government of Tuvalu ratified the <i>United Nations Worst Forms of Child Labour Convention No. 182</i> .

## The UN Convention on the Rights of the Child is based on four principles:

Principle 1	Principle 2
<b>Non-discrimination</b> All children have rights and they must be respected without discrimination.	<b>Best interests of the child</b> When decisions are made that affect the lives of children, it's very important to think about what is best for the child. It is important for adults to think about what is best for a child when they make decisions.
Principle 3	Principle 4
<b>Right to survival, protection and development</b> Governments should protect children from harm and help children live and grow to be the best they can be.	<b>Participation</b> Children have the right to give their opinion in all matters that affect them and to have their voices heard. Their views should always be taken seriously and they should have more say as they grow older. Children have the right to give their opinion and for others to listen to what they have to say.

Ratification of the *UN Convention on the Rights of the Child* demonstrates a government's commitment to:

- **Provide children** an adequate standard of living, health care, education and services, as well as to play and recreation;
- **Protect children** from violence, abuse, neglect, exploitation and discrimination. This includes the right to safe places for children to play;
- **Participation** in communities, programmes and services, including educational and community programmes, youth voice activities, and involving children as decision makers.

In 1995, by ratifying the *UN Convention on the Rights of the Child*, the Government of Tuvalu committed to the convention and accepted the responsibilities that come with ensuring rights for all children. All of the Pacific countries, including Tuvalu have signed and ratified the *UN Convention on the Rights of the Child* (see Annex B for a child-friendly version of the *UN Convention on the Rights of the Child*).

Ratification of the *Worst Forms of Child Labour Convention No. 182* demonstrates a government's commitment to protect children from the worst forms of child labour, including slavery, forced labour, and the sale and trafficking of children, as well as the use of a child for prostitution, pornography or illicit activities, and hazardous types of work. In 2019, by ratifying the *Worst Forms of Child Labour Convention No. 182*, the Government of Tuvalu has taken steps to develop the legal framework for combating the worst forms of child labour.

It is important to understand what children's rights are and what role the *UN Convention on the Rights of the Child* plays. Article 19 of the *UN Convention on the Rights of the Child*, in particular, guarantees the right of every child to be protected from all forms of physical or mental violence, injury or abuse, neglect, maltreatment or exploitation, including sexual abuse. See Annex B for a child-friendly version of the *UN Convention on the Rights of the Child*.

## What rights are reflected in the Constitution of Tuvalu?

The Constitution of Tuvalu includes a Bill of Rights which contains the fundamental human rights and freedoms guaranteed to every person in Tuvalu, whatever his race, place of origin, political opinions, colour, religious beliefs or lack of religious beliefs, or sex. Included in the Bill of Rights are the following fundamental rights and freedoms:

- the right not to be deprived of life
- personal liberty
- security for his person
- the protection of the law
- freedom of belief
- freedom of expression
- freedom of assembly and association
- protection for the privacy of his home and other property; and
- protection from unjust deprivation of property

The Constitution of Tuvalu can be retrieved from: [http://www.tuvaluislands.com/const\\_tuvalu.htm](http://www.tuvaluislands.com/const_tuvalu.htm)


## Who is responsible for protecting children from violence?

The Government of Tuvalu should make sure that children do not experience violence or abuse in the home and family, schools, churches or the community. The Government of Tuvalu has taken steps to support children and protect children from violence and abuse, as well as exploitation. There are important steps being taken to protect Tuvaluan children from violence and abuse.

### Timeline of steps taken to protect child rights in Tuvalu

2014	2016	2017	2020
Government of Tuvalu passed the Family Protection and Domestic Violence Act to protect children from violence, abuse and neglect within the home and family.	Government of Tuvalu repealed the provision in the Education Act that allowed corporal punishment in schools.	Government of Tuvalu established that schools cannot physically discipline children or threaten to physically discipline children.	Government of Tuvalu is drafting a new Child Protection in School Policy that elaborates on acceptable and prohibited discipline of children.





People should be aware of how common violence against children is and which children may be at risk of experiencing violence. Parents, caregivers, teachers, religious leaders and community leaders should understand the harmful effects of violence and abuse, including corporal punishment, on children.

2014: The Government of Tuvalu passed the Family Protection and Domestic Violence Act to help protect children from violence, abuse and neglect within the home and family. The Act defines ‘child abuse’ as causing or subjecting a child to physical, sexual or psychological abuse. ‘Psychological abuse’ includes intimidation, harassment and threats of physical, sexual or economic abuse.

This Act is important because it also protects women from violence and abuse in marriage and intimate relationships at the hands of husbands or partners and other family members.

2016: The Government of Tuvalu repealed the provision in the Education Act that allowed corporal punishment in schools.

2017: The Government of Tuvalu established that schools cannot physically discipline children or threaten to physically discipline children and if they do, there are consequences which include the involvement of police and courts.

2020: The Government of Tuvalu is drafting a new Child Protection in Schools Policy which elaborates on acceptable and prohibited discipline of children. A new Child Welfare and Protection Bill is also underway, which prohibits discipline and punishment of children that involves violence and promotes the use of positive discipline by parents and families.

It is important that children and adults have a place to report a violent or abusive act in a safe and confidential way. Reports made by children and adults should be investigated by authorities.

It should be possible for a person who commits an act of violence or abuse against a child to be taken to court. When this happens, the child who the act was committed against should not be blamed.

**It is never acceptable for someone to be violent or abusive toward a child!**  
**There are no justifications for being violent or abusive toward a child!**  
**Corporal punishment is no longer allowed in schools in Tuvalu!**

## Annex A: Tell Me What to Do Instead (Classroom Version)

### Tell Me What To Do Instead! Classroom Version

#### COMMUNICATION IS THE KEY

1. Tell a child what to do instead of what not to do.
2. Show the child by modelling or using a picture of the action.
3. Clearly and simply state what you expect the child to do.
4. Remember that young children may use inappropriate behavior because they do not understand the social rules and/or because they are unable to consistently apply what they are in the process of learning.
5. Talk to young children using language they understand. Young children may not understand a word like “don’t” because it is a short word for “do not” and he/she may not know what the “negation” of a word means.
6. Encourage the child in a way that lets him/her know that he/she is exhibiting the desired behaviour. Use positive, descriptive acknowledgement while the child is making an effort or is doing the desired behavior.
7. Some children will respond better to more subdued expressions, and acknowledging them in a “matter of fact” way might be more effective.
8. For the most part, be enthusiastic and generous with encouragement. Most children can never get enough!

#### Examples:

Avoid	Say/Model	Positive Descriptive Acknowledgement
Don't run!	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Walk</li><li>• Use walking feet</li><li>• Stay with me</li><li>• Hold my hand</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• You're holding my hand. That is so respectful.</li><li>• You walked across the classroom. You made a safe choice.</li><li>• You are walking beside me and keeping me company. That is so friendly!</li></ul>
Stop climbing!	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Keep your feet on the floor</li><li>• Do you need something up high?</li><li>• Let's find a safe way to reach it</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Wow! You have both feet on the floor! You are being safe.</li><li>• You asked for help to get something, you are being careful.</li></ul>
Don't touch!	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Look with your eyes</li><li>• Keep your hands down</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• You were really listening; you are looking with your eyes!</li><li>• You kept your hands down. That is respectful.</li></ul>
No yelling!	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Use a calm voice</li><li>• Use an inside voice</li><li>• Turn the volume down</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• You are using a calm voice! You look happy.</li><li>• You are using a soft voice inside the classroom. How respectful.</li></ul>
Stop whining!	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Use a calm voice</li><li>• Talk so that I can understand you</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• You are talking so clearly! That is so helpful.</li><li>• You told me with your words what was wrong. That is respectful.</li><li>• You used your words. How respectful!</li></ul>
Don't stand on the chair!	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Sit on the chair</li><li>• Chairs are for sitting</li><li>• Do you need something up high?</li><li>• Let's find a safe way to reach it.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• You are sitting on the chair. What a careful girl.</li><li>• You were responsible when you sat in the chair.</li><li>• You stood on the ladder. You chose to be safe.</li></ul>
Don't hit!	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Gentle hands</li><li>• Hands are for playing, eating, and hugging</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• When you used gentle hands you were being respectful.</li><li>• You used your hands for clapping! You like being safe.</li><li>• You are hugging her. What a friendly girl.</li></ul>
No coloring on the wall!!	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Colour on the paper</li><li>• Put the paper on the easel if you want to colour standing up</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• You put the paper on the easel. That is being responsible.</li><li>• Wow. You are coloring so carefully. You are focused.</li><li>• You are an artist standing at the easel.</li></ul>
Don't throw your toys!	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Play with the toys on the floor</li><li>• Toys stay close to the ground</li><li>• Please keep the toys on the table</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• You are playing with the toys on the floor. So safe.</li><li>• You decided to keep the toys on the table. You are respectful.</li></ul>
Stop playing with your food!	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Food goes on the spoon and then in your mouth</li><li>• Say “all done” when you are finished eating</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• You're using your spoon. You're being careful.</li><li>• You said “all done.” That is helpful.</li><li>• You are eating your food using your spoon and fork. That is practicing manners.</li></ul>
Don't play in the water/sink!	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Wash your hands</li><li>• If you're finished washing your hands, please dry them</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• You washed your hands. What a healthy guy!</li><li>• You followed the hand washing steps! You try hard.</li></ul>

Adapted in 2013 by Laura Fish of WestEd from Lentini, R., Vaughn, B.J., & Fox, L (2005). Creating Teaching Tools for Young Children with Challenging Behaviour [CD-ROM]. (Early Intervention Positive Behaviour Support, The Division of Applied Research and Educational Support 13301 Bruce B. Downs Tampa, FL33612)



## Annex B: UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) (Child-friendly version)

### Article 1

Everyone under 18 has these rights.

### Article 2

All children have these rights, no matter who they are, where they live, what their parents do, what language they speak, what their religion is, whether they are a boy or girl, what their culture is, whether they have a disability, or whether they are rich or poor. No child should be treated unfairly on any basis.

### Article 3

All adults should do what is best for you. When adults make decisions, they should think about how their decisions will affect children.

### Article 4

The government has a responsibility to make sure your rights are protected. They must help your family to protect your rights and create an environment where you can grow and reach your potential.

### Article 5

Your family has the responsibility to help you learn to exercise your rights, and to ensure that your rights are protected.

### Article 6

You have the right to be alive.

### Article 7

You have the right to a name, and this should be officially recognised by the government. You have the right to a nationality (to belong to a country).

### Article 8

You have the right to an identity – an official record of who you are. No one should take this away from you.

### Article 9

You have the right to live with your parent(s), unless it is bad for you. You have the right to live with a family who cares for you.

### Article 10

If you live in a different country than your parents, you have the right to be together in the same place.

### Article 11

You have the right to be protected from kidnapping.

### Article 12

You have the right to give your opinion, and for adults to listen and take it seriously.

### Article 13

You have the right to find out things and share what you think with others, by talking, drawing, writing or in any other way unless it harms or offends other people.

### Article 14

You have the right to choose your own religion and beliefs. Your parents should help you decide what is right and wrong, and what is best for you.

### Article 15

You have the right to choose your own friends and join or set up groups, as long as it isn't harmful to others.

### Article 16

You have the right to privacy.

### Article 17

You have the right to get information that is important to your well-being, from radio, newspapers, books, computers and other sources. Adults should make sure that the information you are getting is not harmful and help you find and understand the information you need.

### Article 18

You have the right to be raised by your parent(s) if possible.

### Article 19

You have the right to be protected from being hurt and mistreated, in body or mind.

### Article 20

You have the right to special care and help if you cannot live with your parents.

### Article 21

You have the right to care and protection if you are adopted or in foster care.

### Article 22

You have the right to special protection and help if you are a refugee (if you have been forced to leave your home and live in another country), as well as all the rights in this Convention.

### Article 23

You have the right to special education and care if you have a disability, as well as all the rights in this Convention, so that you can live a full life.

### Article 24

You have the right to the best health care possible, safe water to drink, nutritious food, a clean and safe environment, and information to help you stay well.

### Article 25

If you live in care or in other situations away from home, you have the right to have these living arrangements looked at regularly to see if they are the most appropriate.

### Article 26

You have the right to help from the government if you are poor or in need.

### Article 27

You have the right to food, clothing, a safe place to live and to have your basic needs met. You should not be disadvantaged so that you can't do many of the things other kids can do.

### Article 28

You have the right to a good quality education. You should be encouraged to go to school to the highest level you can.

### Article 29

Your education should help you use and develop your talents and abilities. It should also help you learn to live peacefully, protect the environment and respect other people.

### Article 30

You have the right to practice your own culture, language and religion – or any you choose. Minority and indigenous groups need special protection of this right.

### Article 31

You have the right to play and rest.

### Article 32

You have the right to protection from work that harms you, and is bad for your health and education. If you work, you have the right to be safe and paid fairly.

### Article 33

You have the right to protection from harmful drugs and from the drug trade.

### Article 34

You have the right to be free from sexual abuse.

### Article 35

No one is allowed to kidnap or sell you.

### Article 36

You have the right to protection from any kind of exploitation (being taken advantage of).

### Article 37

No one is allowed to punish you in a cruel or harmful way.

### Article 38

You have the right to protection and freedom from war. Children under 15 cannot be forced to go into the army or take part in war.

### Article 39

You have the right to help if you've been hurt, neglected or badly treated.

### Article 40

You have the right to legal help and fair treatment in a justice system that respects your rights.

### Article 41

If the laws of your country provide better protection of your rights than the articles in this Convention, those laws should apply.

### Article 42






You have the right to know your rights! Adults should know about these rights and help you learn about them, too.

### Articles 43 to 54

These articles explain how governments and international organisations like UNICEF will work to ensure children are protected with their rights.


*Source: The National Child Day: Children's Rights Activity Guide developed by the Public Health Agency of Canada (2018).*





The brand imagery being used for Pacific Partnership is inspired by empowering female-specific tattoo motifs used in the Pacific. Termed *veiqia* in Fiji or *malu* in Samoa, these tattoos are believed to give shelter, strength and protection to young women, just as the Pacific Partnership aims to empower women, improve gender equality and end violence against women and girls. The Pacific Partnership's implementers respectfully acknowledge that these symbols were traditionally only marked on women, and are empowering and reflect heritage, tribe, identity and strength.

For details about female tattooing in the Pacific Islands, for example in Fiji, there are projects such as The Veiqia Project creative research project inspired by the practice of Fijian female tattooing: [www.theveiqiaproject.com](http://www.theveiqiaproject.com)









**We need to work together to ensure  
that children have the opportunity to  
grow and develop into all they were  
created to be!**

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