

PEER REVIEW HISTORY

BMJ Paediatrics Open publishes all reviews undertaken for accepted manuscripts. Reviewers are asked to complete a checklist review form and are provided with free text boxes to elaborate on their assessment. These free text comments are reproduced below.

ARTICLE DETAILS

TITLE (PROVISIONAL)	Hitting children is wrong
AUTHORS	Waterston, Tony; Janson, Staffan

VERSION 1 – REVIEW

REVIEWER	Reviewer name: Luis Rajmil Institution and Country: Retired. Barcelona, Spain Competing interests: non declared
REVIEW RETURNED	21-May-2020

GENERAL COMMENTS	<p>The authors approach a very important and necessary subject regarding physical punishment to children. They have also review advances and setbacks in children's rights and in reporting of physical maltreatment. It is important at this time with the pandemic, where family confinement is the most widespread measure, and the increase in various forms of child abuse has been reported.</p> <p>Authors would be taken into account a minor changes:</p> <p>1 Although the prohibition of physical punishment plays an important role, as the authors show in their review, it seems that the implementation of the laws in each country has been, among other factors, after various campaigns carried out by different organizations, international groups, NGOs, etc. According to the study from Lansford et al. the frequency of punishment was relatively independent of the laws implemented in specific countries and instead would be part of campaigns and awareness of families on the adverse effects of corporal punishment. This fact would be commented.</p> <p>2 One of the factors that could be mentioned is the role of social inequalities, not only religion and cultural groups, just in case there was any evidence on this factor. If the authors consider convenient, it could be mentioned or discussed as a possible associated factor (level of education, family situation, etc.).</p> <p>3 It could also be mentioned the need for future studies to check the changes in frequency and in individual, family, and social attitudes in this regard.</p>
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REVIEWER	Reviewer name: Elizabeth Gershoff Institution and Country: University of Texas at Austin United States of America Competing interests: I have no competing interests to disclose.
REVIEW RETURNED	25-May-2020

GENERAL COMMENTS	<p>This editorial makes the brief but compelling case that countries can and should ban corporal punishment of children and that pediatricians can plan a role in achieving such bans. This is an important topic and one that is relevant to the journal's audience.</p> <p>The information provided is accurate, although scantily referenced and presented in a somewhat haphazard manner.</p>
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	<p>That said, given that this is a short-form editorial, it is probably fine.</p> <p>The authors refer to the government officials and advocates who worked to bring about the ban in Scotland. However, they then go on to mention a coalition of advocates in Uganda—this is nice to hear about, but Uganda has not banned corporal punishment and so it does not flow from the thesis sentence of the paragraph (e.g., “In many countries that have instituted a ban,...”). The connection between these two examples, or the contrast, needs to be clearer.</p> <p>The online posting from someone in Uganda is not helpful and could be entirely cut.</p> <p>Paediatricians are often more concerned with how to talk with parents in their practice about discipline than they are about advocating for policy change. A paragraph of suggestions for steps they can take in their own practices could be helpful.</p> <p>The first author for the publication #3 in the References list is Murray, not Maurice, Straus.</p> <p>A citation for the UNCRC would be helpful.</p> <p>Contractions should not be used in formal writing (see last page of the document).</p>
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VERSION 1 – AUTHOR RESPONSE

Thank you for your letter of 26th May and editorial and referee comments which we have addressed in the accompanying revision.

Our response is as follows:

Formatting amendments: we have added a new title page with the required information, apologies that this was not included. The required statements have also been added.

Referee 1 comments: 1. We have commented on the need for an information campaign on the adverse effects of corporal punishment

2, 3. We have mentioned the role of social inequalities and the need for future studies to monitor change in prevalence.

Referee 2 comments: we have provided a justification for including information on the role of civil society in Uganda and have cut the quotation from CHIFA. we have added suggestions for how paediatricians may take advocacy steps in their own practice, and we have corrected the name in reference 3. we have provided a link to UNCRC and spelled out the names on the final page as requested.