



Talking to other people about Children are Unbeatable!

Talking to people you know about **Children are Unbeatable!** can be a great way to get others involved. You could just chat to your friends about it, or you could give a talk in your youth group, club or school (see page 3 for more about this).

Here are some things you could say when you are talking to people about us, whether you're just talking to your friends or talking to a whole school.

- The Children are Unbeatable! Alliance is a huge group of more than 400 organisations, including the NSPCC and all the major children's charities, and many individuals.
- We want the law to change so that nobody will legally be able to hit or hurt children and young people.
- Explain why you think the law should change. For example: because it's not fair that children are less protected than adults, because hitting children hurts them and there are much better ways of punishing them, because children's human rights should be respected, because the United Nations says the UK should change the law...
- Explain that changing the law *doesn't* mean sending lots of parents to prison. We don't want to change the law in order to punish parents – we just want the law to be fair and the government to send a clear message that hitting children is wrong. In Sweden, it has been illegal to hurt children for 30 years. They didn't send lots of parents to prison when the law was first made, and now almost nobody thinks it's OK to hurt children.
- Say that we want children and young people to get involved in campaigning with us. There are lots of things that people can do – from meeting their MPs to using MySpace to help promote us. **Collect people's addresses and send them to us**, so we can let them know what they can do.
- If you want to, you could let people ask questions and turn it into a debate. Lots of people have strong feelings about this subject – most probably, some people will agree with you and others will disagree, but you could have an interesting discussion!



Here are some questions people might ask...



Is it really legal to hurt children?

Yes! The law says that some adults (including parents, but not only them) can hit or hurt children to punish them as long as they don't leave a mark. This often – but not always – means 'smacking' them.

What if a parent just loses their temper and smacks their child once? You might send them to prison and mess their whole family up!

This wouldn't happen. We want the best for children and, obviously, usually the best thing will be for them to stay with their families and not have their parents go to prison. If the law changed, this would still be true. At the moment, it is illegal for adults to hit each other, but an adult who just loses their temper and hits another adult once is very unlikely to go to prison. The same would be true for parents. However, if the law was changed, it would make it much easier to prosecute people who really do abuse their children.

What about parents' rights? Don't parents have a right to discipline their children how they choose to?

No, they don't. Nobody has the right to hurt another person. The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child says that children have the right to be fully protected from violence, including in the home. There are lots of better ways of punishing children which don't hurt them.

But smacking isn't real violence!

"Smacking" is a word that is used to make hitting children sound better. It is just as violent to hit a child as it is to hit an adult.

Some people's religion says that they have to smack their children, so how can you make it illegal?

It's true that some people do believe that their religion tells them to punish their children physically. However, there are lots of things that some religions suggest doing which are illegal – for instance, attacking people who have different religions. These things are still illegal, and it is right that they are.

Many religious people also believe that it is wrong to hit children. Children are Unbeatable! has members from all the major religions.

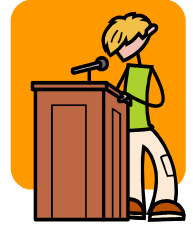
I was smacked and it never did me any harm.

That might be true, but it could do a lot of harm to another person. Hitting children can be painful and deeply humiliating. Surveys show that a large majority of children think it is wrong for an adult to hit a child.

Only a few people think hitting children should be illegal.

That's not true – the Children are Unbeatable! Alliance is a huge group of organisations, including the NSPCC and all the major children's charities. A survey in 2004 found that 71% of adults in England and Wales supported changing the law.

Giving a talk...



Places where you could give a talk:

- A school – you could talk just to your class or perhaps to the whole school in assembly.
- A youth group.
- Another club you go to – for instance, Guides or Scouts.
- Anywhere else you can think of!

Remember, anybody under 18 can be involved if they want to. Nobody is too young – there are things that everyone can do. For example, younger children can draw pictures explaining why they think it should be illegal to hit children. We will show the pictures to the government or use them in other ways.

How to give a talk...

1. Decide when you want to do your talk.
2. Get permission from whoever is in charge. For example, in a youth group, this will be your youth leader; in a school, you will need to ask your teacher. Here is a note which you can copy or cut out to give to people you are asking for permission from.

Dear.....,

I am a member of the Children are Unbeatable! Alliance. We campaign to change the law to make it illegal to hit or hurt children.

At the moment, there are lots of opportunities for children and young people to get involved in the Children are Unbeatable! Alliance. They can do things like meeting MPs to discuss changing the law, writing to newspapers about the campaign and telling other people about the campaign.

Being involved in the campaign is a great experience for children and young people – they have the chance to learn lots of things, have their say about an important issue in children's rights, and make a real difference.

Could I give a talk at, on....., about the campaign?

Signed,

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3. Prepare what you are going to say in advance. You could use the information on pages 1 and 2 to help you.
4. Make sure you have enough leaflets, stickers and so on for everyone who might want one. If you need any more, just ask Elinor for some.
5. Give your talk! **Make sure that you collect the addresses and contact details of people who are interested in getting involved, and send them to Elinor.** This is very important – we need their addresses so we can contact them again later.

Good luck! And remember to ask if you have any questions, and tell us how things are going. **email:** elinor@childrenareunbeatable.org.uk, **phone/text:** 07504 738 741

