



Children are Unbeatable! Alliance

Teachers' notes: Legalised Violence - Introduction

Stop Smacking

You will need

- 'Quiz - Legalised Violence' powerpoint.
- Children are Unbeatable! Alliance sign-up forms.

You could also use:

- Information about the law - 'Info Sheet 5' from the Help at Hand Toolkit.
- Children are Unbeatable! Alliance 'Questions and Answers'.

All available for free on our website, www.childrenareunbeatable.org.uk/children

How to run the activities

Use the 'Quiz - Legalised Violence' powerpoint.

Slide 1 introduces the quiz and the words 'legal' and 'illegal'.

Slide 2 asks students whether they think a certain action is legal or illegal. Ask them to put their hands up or call out what they think. Click once to bring up the question, then click again to bring up the answer.

This could lead on to a discussion - see below.

Slide 3 explains that students can sign up to the Children are Unbeatable! Alliance to show their support for law change. Give students a chance to sign up on the forms. (Please return these to the address below).

Information and points to discuss

• In the UK at the moment, the law says that some people who look after children can hurt children to punish them. If an adult hits another adult, or a young person hits an adult, that's a crime whether it causes any injury or not. But if a parent hits a child, the parent can say it was "reasonable punishment". Unless the hitting is quite serious, that stops it being a crime. See *Info Sheet 5 from the Help at Hand Toolkit* for more detail on the law.

• What do students think about the current law?

• Students might ask whether it is legal for a child to hit an adult. The age of criminal responsibility in England is 10. Above this age, children can be found guilty of crimes, including assault (which includes hitting someone). So, the answer is that it is illegal for a child over 10 to hit an adult. Children are the only group of people that can legally be hit in Britain today.

• What other laws are different for children and adults? Why are they different? Are they right?

• In some other countries, children have full protection from violence. The first country to make all violence against children illegal was Sweden, in 1979. Since then, 23 more countries have made violence against children illegal, and at least 23 more are in the process of doing so. Today, the UK is one of only 5 countries in Europe (the EU) which has not made violence against children illegal or committed to doing so.

• Corporal punishment in schools is still legal in many countries, including in the USA. In the UK, corporal punishment in schools was legal until 1989 (state schools) and 1999 (private schools). What do students think about this?

• The Churches' Network for Non-Violence and the Children are Unbeatable! Alliance believe that all violence against children should be illegal. We want children and young people to be safe and to have their right to protection from violence to be respected. See *the Children are Unbeatable! Alliance 'Questions and Answers'* for more information.

About us

These lesson plans have been developed by the Children are Unbeatable! Alliance and the Churches' Network for Non-violence (CNNV), in conjunction with the CNNV 2009-10 roadshow: **Growing up without violence - Ending legalised violence against children**. The roadshow aims to reflect landmark events in children's rights in 2009 and to further the movement to end all forms of violence against children including corporal punishment.

For more information, please contact Elinor Milne, Children's Campaign Co-ordinator:
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