ADDRESSING VIOLENCE AND ABUSE
GLOBAL DATA COLLECTION ON CHILD DISCIPLINE

Theresa Kilbane, Senior Advisor, Child Protection
UNICEF Headquarters
Prevalence of violence

Physical abuse, neglect and domestic violence involving young children to a large extent is hidden to the public eye.

The exact prevalence is unknown but we know that:
Most abuse of young children occurs within families;
Not limited by geography, ethnicity or social status;
Prevalence dramatically underreported;
   25% of children worldwide
   50-75% exposed to violence are also victims

→ Children under 5 at greatest risk for severe injury and long term consequences;

→ Social /cultural norms, tolerance towards violence and structural gaps/weak systems

→ (Under)Reporting and monitoring → “benefits have to outweigh the “risks”; fear of stigma; social acceptance; invisibility towards children; gaps in the system; official findings require high level of certainty and legal justification.

(WHO, 2010)
Why age matters

The first year is the most dangerous period of a child’s life - not only from infectious disease, but also due to abuse and neglect.

→ Young children are less able to anticipate danger or know how to keep themselves safe. They are dependent on others to uphold their rights.

→ Their feeling of safety is linked with availability of physical and attachment figures. Positive parenting can maximize the child’s social and emotional development.

→ Chronic activation of the body’s stress response system can lead to long-term mental and physical health issues – this is particularly true in when the brain is in development.
Toxic Stress Damages Brain Architecture

→ Excessive and repeated stress causes the release of chemicals that impair cell growth and interfere with the formation of healthy neural circuits in the brain.

→ Toxic stress can damage the brain’s stress response system and contribute to premature aging of the body.

→ Parts of the brain remain plastic (i.e., vulnerable to toxic stress) into early adulthood.

Multiple Indicator Cluster Surveys – global survey on children and women

- Household surveys designed to collect data on children and women and to provide evidence base for improved policy formulation, programme planning and advocacy

- Key data source for monitoring the WSC goals, the MDGs, the World Fit for Children goals, and other major international commitments

- More than 100 indicators (nutrition, child health, mortality, child protection, education, HIV, etc.)

- Data available by background characteristics (sex, ethnicity, wealth, education, etc.) and at the sub-national level

- 60 countries surveyed in MICS 4 (2009-2012)
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Round</th>
<th>Year/Period</th>
<th>Emphasis</th>
<th>No. of Surveys</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>MICS1</td>
<td>1995</td>
<td>World Summit for Children Goals</td>
<td>62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MICS2</td>
<td>2000</td>
<td>World Summit for Children Goals</td>
<td>65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MICS3</td>
<td>2005-2007</td>
<td>World Fit For Children Goals, MDGs, Other Global Monitoring Frameworks</td>
<td>52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MICS4</td>
<td>2009-2012</td>
<td>MDGs, Other Global Monitoring Frameworks</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MICS5</td>
<td>2013-2014</td>
<td>Final MDG Assessment, A Promise Renewed, Other Global Monitoring Frameworks</td>
<td>40 +</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Child Protection Modules in MICS – 2002 to present

Birth Registration (2005-2011)
Child Labour
Child Discipline (2005-2011)
Child Marriage
Attitudes towards Domestic Violence
FGM

Other relevant cross-cutting issues:
Living arrangements
Child Disability
Children in Child-Headed Household
Child Discipline Module in MICS (and DHS)

MICS3 (2005-2007) 33 countries

MICS4 (2010-2012) 42 countries (47 surveys)

Same module used in some DHS surveys (2006-2010): 5 countries (Albania, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Egypt, Liberia)

Data on child discipline also collected in other national surveys (Dominican Republic, Fiji, Kiribati, Morocco, Solomon Islands, State of Palestine, Vanuatu)

4 EAPR countries with data from MIC
### Available data sources for EAPR: multi-country surveys

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>DHS</th>
<th>MICS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cambodia</td>
<td>2000, 2005</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>China</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cook Islands</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fiji</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indonesia</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kiribati</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lao People’s Democratic Republic</td>
<td></td>
<td>2006</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Malaysia</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mongolia</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Myanmar</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nauru</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Niue</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Philippines</td>
<td></td>
<td>2008</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Samoa</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Solomon Islands</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thailand</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Timor-Leste</td>
<td>2009-2010</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tonga</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tuvalu</td>
<td>2007</td>
<td>2006, 2010-2011</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vietnam</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Prepared by the Statistics and Monitoring Section, Division of Policy and Strategy, UNICEF NYHQ
Child Discipline Module

Questions addressed to family relatives/mothers or primary caregivers of one randomly selected child aged 2 to 14 years old

The questionnaire asked whether any member of the household had used any of various disciplinary practices with that child during the past month

8 violent disciplinary practices: 2 psychological (such as shouting and name calling); 6 physical (such as shaking, spanking and hitting with an implement)

3 non-violent disciplinary practices (such as taking away privileges and explaining why something is wrong)

Assesses respondents’ attitude toward physical punishment
Violent discipline is widespread in most countries

Percentage of children aged 2-14 years who have experienced violent discipline (physical punishment or psychological aggression) in the past month, 2005-2011

Note: Age group for Egypt is children aged 3-17 years and for Kyrgyzstan is children aged 3-14 years

Prepared by the Statistics and Monitoring section of UNICEF NYHQ
Children who have experienced violent discipline in the home  EAPRO – SOWC 2013

- Mongolia
- Solomon Islands
- Fiji
- Lao PDR
- Viet Nam
- Vanuatu
- Kiribati
Risk Factors:

In about half of the countries surveyed (17 out of 33), there is no difference in the prevalence of violent discipline between boys and girls.

In the remaining 16 countries, boys are more likely to be subject to violent disciplinary practices, but differences remain small (UNICEF, Child Disciplinary Practices at Home 2010)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Males</th>
<th>Females</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Weighted average</td>
<td>78</td>
<td>72</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

N = 16
Family Wealth

- **Definition:**
  - Wealthiest 40 percent and poorest 60 percent
  - Relative not absolute wealth is measured

- In more than half of the countries with available data (17 out of 30), there is **no difference** in the prevalence of violent discipline between poorest and wealthiest children.

- In the rest of countries (12 out of the 30), children from the poorest 60 percent of households are more likely to receive a violent discipline, but overall differences remain small.

  (UNICEF, Child Disciplinary Practices at Home 2010)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>N = 12</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Poorest 60%</td>
<td>77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wealthiest 40%</td>
<td>70</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Weighted average**
The large majority of mothers/primary caregivers do not think that physical punishment is necessary.

Percentage of mothers or primary caregivers who do not think that physical punishment is necessary, 2005-2011.

Note: Age group for Egypt is children aged 3-17 years and for Kyrgyzstan is children aged 3-14 years.

Prepared by the Statistics and Monitoring section of UNICEF NYHQ.
When the mother thinks that physical punishment is necessary, her children are significantly more at risk of violent discipline (based on Child Disc Study, 2010).

Percentage of children aged 2–14 who experienced physical punishment in the past month according to the mother’s or primary caregiver’s belief in the need for physical punishment, by country, 2005–2006.

- **Mother/caregiver does not think that physical punishment is necessary**
- **Mother/caregiver thinks that physical punishment is necessary**

Countries included in the graph:
- Kazakhstan
- Lao
- Bosnia & Herzegovina
- Azerbaijan
- Kyrgyzstan
- Trinidad & Tobago
- Albania
- Burkina Faso
- Ukraine
- Vietnam
- Ghana
- Suriname
- Belarus
- Guyana
- Belize
- Gambia
- Djibouti
- Sierra Leone
- Tajikistan
- Tonga
- Serbia
- Montenegro
- Jamaica
- Central African Republic
- Iraq
- Cote d’Ivoire
- Cameroon
- Georgia
- Guinea-Bissau
- Yemen
- Algeria
- Syria

The graph shows the percentage of children aged 2–14 who experienced physical punishment in the past month, differentiated by the mother’s or primary caregiver’s belief in the need for physical punishment, by country, for the years 2005–2006.
One state has prohibited corporal punishment in all settings, including the home (New Zealand).

Seventeen states have prohibited corporal punishment in schools, 17 in penal institutions, and one in alternative care settings.

In 25 states, corporal punishment is unlawful as a sentence of the courts.

For more detailed info: [www.endcorporalpunishment.org](http://www.endcorporalpunishment.org)

Overall programme implications

→ Programmes need to address the underlying causes of abuse, including societal beliefs and norms. Successful programmes should include interventions at all levels.

→ Programmes should be comprehensive, holistic and include interventions at all levels – including legal reform/legislative responses to ban corporal punishment as well as programmes to support parents towards alternative forms of child discipline.

→ Equity focus – programmes should aim to reach the most excluded and those who are at greater risk.

→ Programmes should aim to decrease family vulnerability and risk.

→ Interventions to address violence in Early Childhood should not be separate from ECD programmes and strategies but rather mainstreamed into existing efforts and services.
Programme interventions – linking violence prevention to existing efforts

→ Health and nutrition services – including preventative health services (ex: role of maternity wards in providing information to mothers)

→ Stable care giving – families are equipped with skills to practice positive child rearing practices and to protect children from harm

→ Broadly targeted services for families in need – center-based care and education for children

→ Parent support and education - social welfare and educational services/programmes for parents

→ When violence has occurred - specific intervention and services for child maltreatment, mental health or substance abuse

Need to improve data collection and evidence building for programmes that work and reduce VAC
Maintaining interest and commitment at the national and community levels is crucial to the success and to the sustainability of programmes to reduce corporal punishment and violence against children. Public awareness contributes to this process.

It is crucial to:
→ Make use of the media to publicize solutions and initiatives rather than problems;
→ Publicize ways in which families and children can get support from the formal and informal systems (to prevent and respond); create opportunities for families to interact to promote further dialogue and change;
→ Educate adults to identify signs of violence and abuse;
→ Give clear warnings - publicize laws and sanctions.

Two-way communication (bottom-up and top-bottom) - creates demand from the community, supports policy development and increases capacity to respond.
Thank you