

Have a talk about child rearing

If you have any questions concerning the new law, or if you need a talk about child rearing, you can consult your health visitor, the daycare staff in your child's day nursery or kindergarten, the class teacher or your general practitioner.

You are also entitled to anonymous counselling service from the Social Services Department (Socialforvaltningen), or from the school psychologist.

You can contact Parents' direct line (Forældretelefonen) at Children's Welfare (Børns Vilkår), phone: 35 55 55 57, or you can contact IND.sam, in Blågårdsgade 11 B, DK – 2200 Copenhagen N.



The campaign, "Nej til bank" ("No to smacking") is launched in close collaboration between the National Council for Children, Children's Welfare and the Government's Violence Secretariat.



Børnerådet

The National Council for Children (Børnerådet).

Address: Holmens Kanal 22,

DK – 1060 Copenhagen K.

Phone: (+45) 33 92 45 00.



Children's Welfare (Børns Vilkår).

Address: Fridtjof Nansens Plads 2,
Postboks 2681, DK – 2100 Copenhagen Ø.

Phone: (+45) 35 55 55 59.



Voldssekretariatet

The Government's Violence Secretariat (Sekretariatet for Ministerudvalget til koordinering af regeringens indsats mod vold).

Engelsk



*Parents do not
have a right
to hit their children*

Parents must raise their children without resorting to "smacking"

In Denmark it is forbidden by law to smack children. In 1997 the Danish Parliament (Folketinget) adopted a law forbidding parents to submit their children to corporal punishment. It is provided by Statute that:

Barnet har ret til omsorg og tryghed. Det skal behandles med respekt for sin person og må ikke udsættes for legemlig afstraffelse eller anden krænkende behandling.

Lov nr. 416 af 10. juni 1997 om forældremyndighed og samvær, §2, stk.2.

Translated from Danish:

The child is entitled to care and protection. The child shall be treated with respect of his/her person and it must not be exposed to corporal punishment or any other offensive treatment.

The Danish Act No 416 of 10th June 1997 on Parental custody of children and visiting rights, § 2(2).

Formerly, it was quite common to use physical punishment when raising children. In terms of adults, punishment was also part of everyday life. However, physical punishment is prohibited by law.

Looking back upon history shows that:

In 1911: Corporal punishment of prisoners was prohibited

In 1920: Men were prohibited from beating their wives and servants

In 1967: Teachers were prohibited from spanking the pupils

In 1997: Parents were prohibited from smacking their children

With the enactment of this new Act, children will enjoy the same right of protection against physical punishment as adults have enjoyed throughout the ages.

Why raise children without hitting out?

As parents we love our children and we have only got their best interests at heart. When children are smacked, it might be because it is considered to form part of the child's upbringing. It might be a natural thing for some parents to use physical punishment, whereas it is foreign to other parents' nature.

Hitting out might be the last resort and might be provoked by a busy or stressful situation, or maybe we hit the child in order to "tell" them who is in charge.

However, it is harmful to a child when it is smacked. If physical punishment becomes a natural part of the upbringing, the effect might be that the child will suffer from substantial lack of self-confidence or that the child itself will become a person who hits. The relationship of trust and relations between parents and children is spoiled if mummy or daddy – the person whom the child appreciates the most – resorts to physical punishment.

Children have a right to be protected – free of physical punishment – as do adults.

Mutual respect is fostered by love, care and dialogue

It is possible for parents to raise their children without resorting to smacking, and with this newly adopted legislation it will also be necessary. Even though it is now forbidden by law to hit, there are a lot of other ways of showing the child who is in charge. If parents want to obtain mutual respect in their relations to their children, smacking will not get them very far, whereas words, love and care will.