

PETITION

PETITION TO END LEGAL APPROVAL OF CORPORAL PUNISHMENT OF CHILDREN BY REPEALING SECTION 43 OF THE CRIMINAL CODE of CANADA

TO THE HOUSE OF COMMONS IN PARLIAMENT ASSEMBLED

We, the undersigned residents of Canada, draw the attention of the House to the following:

WHEREAS section 43 of our Criminal Code allows schoolteachers, parents and those standing in the place of a parent to use "reasonable" force for the correction" of pupils or children under their care;

WHEREAS "reasonable" force has been interpreted by our courts to include spanking, slapping, strapping, kicking, hitting with belts, sticks and extension cords and causing bruises, welts and abrasions;

WHEREAS such legal approval of violence against children is contrary to their fundamental right to security of the person and to the equal protection and benefit of the law without discrimination as guaranteed by our Charter of Rights and Freedoms

WHEREAS in June 1995, the U N Committee overseeing the implementation of the Convention on the Rights of the Child (ratified by Canada in 1991) recommended to our government that physical punishment of children in families be prohibited;

WHEREAS a study of child abuse in Ontario published in 2002 found that 72% of all substantiated reports of physical abuse in 1998 began as attempts to discipline children by physical punishment. Eight thousand reports of physical abuse were substantiated in Ontario alone in 1998. Thousands of Canadian children are physically and psychologically injured by physical punishment each year;

AND WHEREAS legal approval of the use of force for "correction" teaches children that violence is an acceptable method of dealing with conflict and hence contributes to the level of crime in our society.

THEREFORE your petitioners call upon Parliament to end legal approval of this harmful and discriminatory provision by repealing section 43 of the Criminal Code.

SIGNATURES
(Do not print)

ADDRESSES
(Full home address or city & province)
